

GAMEFAN

GENERATION VIDEO GAME MAGAZINE

VOLUME 5 ISSUE 8

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TREASURES OF
THE DEEP
FINAL FANTASY VII
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TROUBLEMAKERS
GHOST IN
THE SHELL
V-RALLY
FELONY 11/79

LIFE AFTER LARA...

FIGHTING FORCE

CORE & EIDOS TAKE IT TO THE STREETS!

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It's been a hectic week since our narrow escape from Atlanta. Siphoning through 100's of screen shots, making countless phone calls for last minute images and info and looking under every rock to make sure we didn't forget anything, to once again bring you an up close and personal look at 1997's big industry coming out party, the Electronic Entertainment Expo.

Hey, I got to fly on Continental's "oldest plane in the fleet," experience the lush Detroit Airport, and experience the joys of lost luggage at 3:00 AM at LAX. This glamorous life is just too much for me.

This year's show (which took place in swamp like weather) was an interesting one, to say the least. Besides a shocking change of venue this was the first show in 7 years where Sega and Nintendo weren't duking it out for supremacy. Instead, Sony literally took over the place with more at nearly every third-party display and two to three times as much in their own super mega steel monolith of a booth.

What strikes me as stranger yet is that both Nintendo and Sega could have easily had a much better outing had they put out more wares from Japan. Games that are either done or close to it.

Every year Sega's booth has had a section where nearly every Japanese game is displayed on at least one screen. This year however that entire piece was missing, as were such notable titles as Silhouette Mirage by Treasure, SOJ's premiere developer; *Slayers*, a beautiful strategy/RPG based on the popular anime series; *Grandia*, perhaps the most stunning SS RPG ever created, by GameArts; *Evangelion 2nd Impression*, a digital comic/battle sim based on the greatest anime of all time; *Willy Wombat*, a top-down, polygonal action adventure by Westone, makers of *Wonder Boy*; *Princess Crown*, a mind-boggling, hand-drawn 2D fighter that looks to good too be true by Atlas; *Virus*, Sega's own CG/animated adventure, and *Thunder Force 5*, a no-brainer U.S. release by TechnoSoft. Add these to the show floor and viola! More games, better show!

Likewise, Nintendo left behind *Chameleon*

"Hey, I got to fly on Continental's "oldest plane in the fleet"

Twist, *Mischief Makers*, (it's finished but was shown on video only); *Wild Choppers* was nowhere to be seen and *F-Zero 64*, *Zelda 64*, and *Yoshi's Island* were all on video only. *Yoshi* especially looked done enough for at least a spin through level one. Actually, they all did.

Not that Sony had that easy of a time. Sega and Nintendo had some mighty impressive games (you can read all about it inside this very issue) but overall neither could match the gigantic Sony presence.

I'm still not sure how to deal with this new order as I've come to know and respect Nintendo and Sega throughout my 5 years in publishing.

Especially since Sony has already thrown the word "official" on a publication and granted them the sacred disc based on cash, not quality. That's a bad omen if you're in my shoes. Thus far Sony's been wonderful but how they deal with their newfound strength remains to be seen. Of course, we will remain as unbiased as we can be, and focus on you, the GF reader, by bringing you all there is on every platform in sparkling GF form. I do know one thing: As many times as I've seen the lead change hands, this battle is only beginning to rage.

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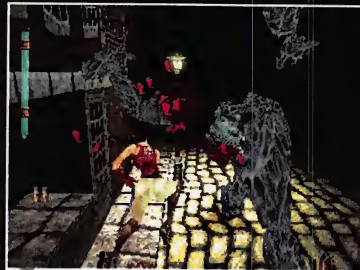


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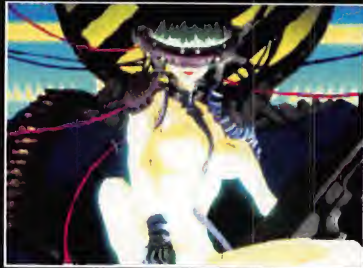
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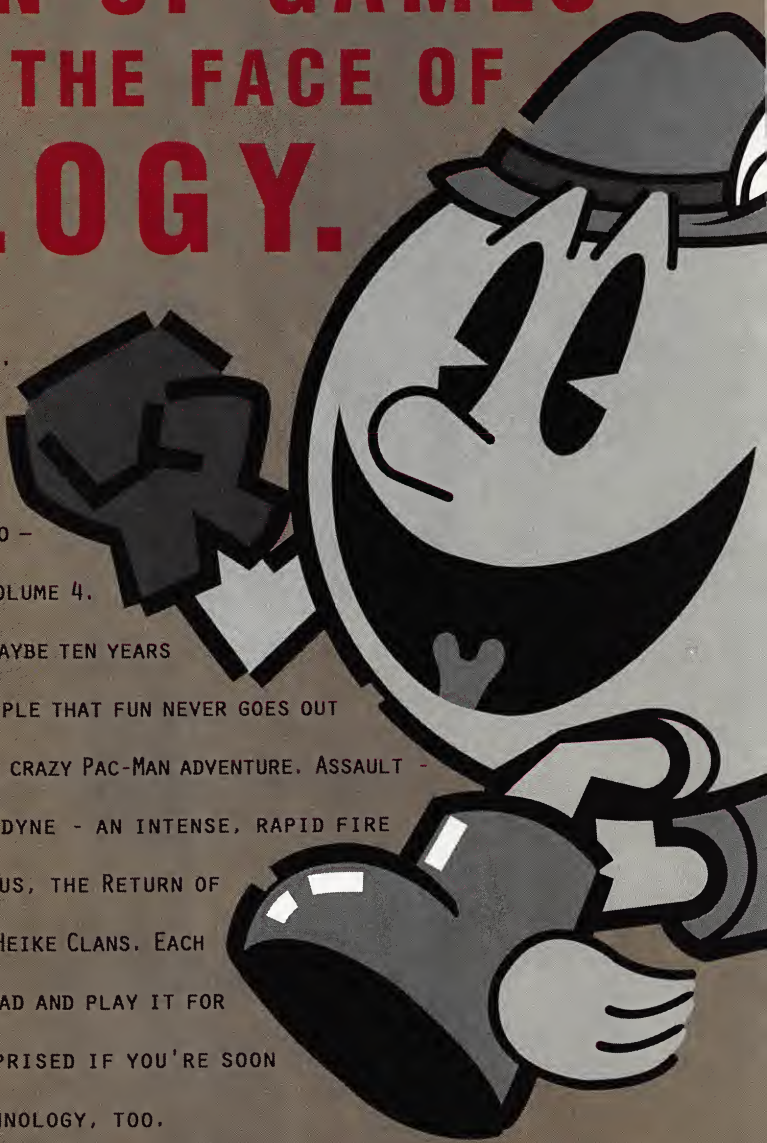
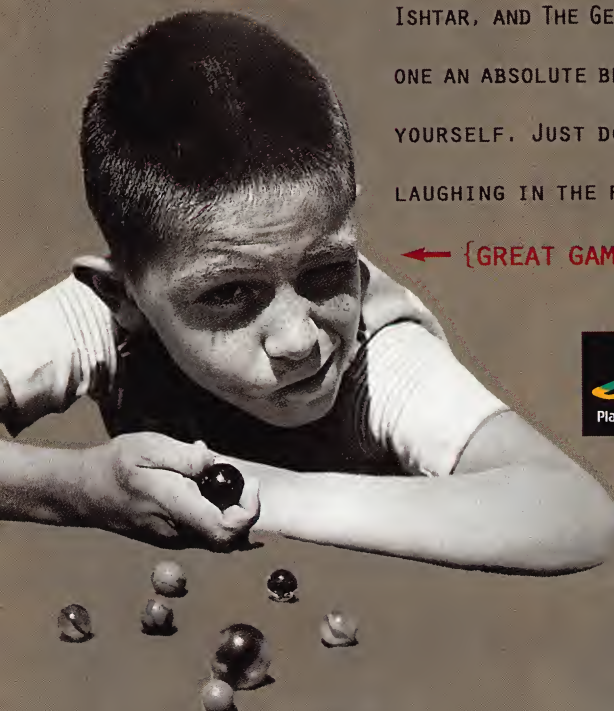
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ONE AN ABSOLUTE BLAST. GO AHEAD AND PLAY IT FOR

YOURSELF. JUST DON'T BE SURPRISED IF YOU'RE SOON

LAUGHING IN THE FACE OF TECHNOLOGY, TOO.

← {GREAT GAMES HAVE NEVER HAD TO BE HIGH-TECH TO BE HIGH-FUN.}



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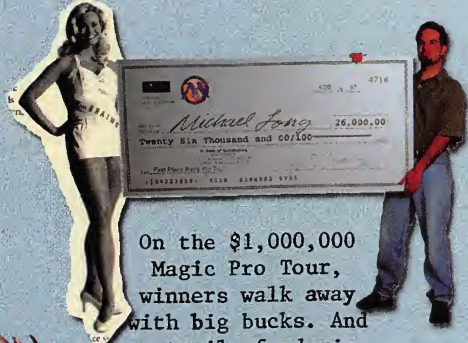


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MYSTICAL LANDS, TIVE DRIVE TEN NEGLECTED N YOUR EARS.



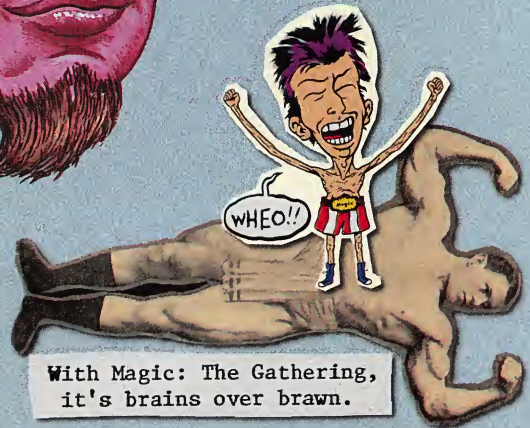
To flee the monotony of everyday life, Magic is a wise alternative to the street luge.



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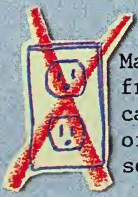
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Top 10 Most Wanted

FOR THE WEEK ENDING 6/30/97

READERS' TOP TEN

1. *Mario Kart 64* - N64
2. *Turok* - N64
3. *Super Mario 64* - N64
4. *Wave Race* - N64
5. *Tomb Raider* - PS

6. *Suikoden* - PS
7. *Shadows of the Empire* - N64
8. *Tekken 2* - PS
9. *Resident Evil* - PS
10. *Doom 64* - N64

READERS' MOST WANTED

1. *Zelda 64* - N64
2. *Final Fantasy VII* - PS
3. *StarFox 64* - N64
4. *GoldenEye 007* - N64
5. *Tekken 3* - PS/N64



6. *Resident Evil 2* - PS
7. *Tomb Raider 2* - PS
8. *Mission Impossible* - N64
9. *Crash Bandicoot 2* - PS
10. *Yoshi's Island* - N64

GAMEFAN EDITOR'S TOP TEN

1. *Yuke Yuke Troublemakers* - N64
2. *Crash 2* - PS
3. *Goldeneye* - N64
4. *Sonic R* - Saturn
5. *Ghost in the Shell* - PS
6. *Banjo Kazooie* - N64
7. *Red Asphalt* - PS
8. *F1-Pole Position* - N64
9. *Treasures of the Deep* - PS
10. *VMX* - PS



1. *Sonic R* - Saturn
2. *Yuke Yuke Trouble Makers* - N64
3. *Sonic Jam* - Saturn
4. *Beastorizer* - PS
5. *Panzer Dragon Saga* - Saturn
6. *Dead or Alive* - Saturn
7. *Fighting Force* - PS
8. *Alien Soldier* - Gen
9. *Nightmare Creatures* - PS
10. *Guardian Heroes* - Saturn

1. *Final Fantasy Tactics* - PS
2. *Samurai Shodown RPG* - Neo
3. *Castlevania X* - PS
4. *Dracula X* - PC Engine
5. *Policenauts* - Saturn
6. *Alundra* - PS
7. *Kowloon's Gate* - PS
8. *Street Fighter III* - Arcade
9. *Lunar 2* - SegaCD
10. *Snatcher* - SegaCD



1. *SF Rush* - N64
2. *Rally Cross* - PS
3. *Tomb Raider* - PS
4. *Felony 11-79* - PS
5. *Street Fighter III* - Arcade
6. *Ace Combat 2* - PS
7. *Rage Racer* - PS
8. *CoolBoarders* - PS
9. *Jet Moto* - PS
10. *Street Fighter Alpha 2* - PS

1. *Nightmare Creatures* - PS
2. *Treasures of the Deep* - PS
3. *Tekken 3* - Arcade
4. *Quake* - Saturn
5. *V Rally* - PS
6. *Goldeneye* - N64
7. *Extreme G* - N64
8. *Parappa the Rapper* - PS
9. *Ace Combat 2* - PS
10. *San Francisco Rush* - N64



1. *Yuke Yuke Trouble Makers* - N64
2. *Banjo-Kazooie* - N64
3. *Crash 2* - PS
4. *Colony Wars* - PS
5. *Ace Combat 2* - PS
6. *Goldeneye* - N64
7. *Conker's Quest* - N64
8. *Street Fighter EX* - PS
9. *Sonic R* - Saturn
10. *Rapid Racer* - PS

WIN

THE GAME SYSTEM OF YOUR CHOICE! ENTER TODAY!

All you have to do to enter the drawing is write down a list of your top 10 favorite games and the 10 games you want the most that aren't out yet, on a piece of paper or a postcard then send them to: GAMEFAN TOP TEN, 5137 Claretton Dr., Suite 210 Agoura Hills, CA 91301

First Prize: Pocket GameBoy.

Second Prize: Your choice of one of the Picks of the Month in Viewpoint.

Third Prize: A FREE year of GameFan! The best magazine in the universe!

Congratulations to last month's winners:

First Prize: Matt Smith, Palmdale, CA
Second Prize: Ruben Avery, St. Louis, MO
Third Prize: Matthew Levitan, New York, NY

Drawing is limited to One (1) entry per person per month. Drawings will be held on the 21st of each month. The three (3) winners will be notified by mail and listed on this page. For a complete list of rules and regulations write: GameFan Top Ten with self addressed & stamped envelope.

DEVELOPER'S TOP TEN

1. *StarFox 64* - N64
"Proves hardware doesn't matter, it's all about game design."
2. *Super Smash TV* - SNES
"4 joysticks. Hands down."
3. *Gunblade NY* - Arcade
"Two big guns, great enemy reactions, SEGA knows."
4. *Soul Blade* - PS
"Tekken number who?"
5. *Contra 3: The Alien Wars* - SNES
"Still sitting in the SNES on my desk till this day!"
6. *Gamera 2000* - PS Import
"More exciting than Panzer Saturn on the PSX? Be afraid."
7. *Space Harrier* - Saturn
"With the Analog NIGHTS Pad! Good clean fun."
8. *Street Fighter II Turbo* - SNES
"What ever happened to Blanka?"
9. *QBERT* - Atari 2600
"Still the one."
10. *Ms. Pac Man* - Namco Classics - PS
"My wife makes me play it every night."

This Month's Guest:

Howard Schwartz
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The mighty Monitaur seeks the finest cheats, secrets and tips known to humanity, and we need them from YOU!! We'll look over all the codes you send and award a magnificent Grand Prize every single month! Remember, no cheap codes from previously published US magazines! Winners will be drawn each month and displayed in the only place where cheaters prosper. (Current subscribers who win a subscription will receive a one-year extension.)

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AND LETTERS TO:**
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**THIRD PRIZE WINNER:
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WILD ARMS

Item Duplication Trick

GRAND PRIZE WINNER
JLee@Internet

Stop wasting money on essential items!



- 1) Make sure the item you want to duplicate is exactly one (1), such as a power apple or medicine.
- 2) Enter a battle
- 3) In the first round, have Rudy use an item, such as a heal berry. (See Shot 1)
- 4) Have Jack switch the position of the heal berry and medicine (or whatever item you've chosen to duplicate). (See Shot 2)
- 5) Have Cecilia defend.
- 6) In the second round have Rudy use the heal berry again, you'll see that the medicine is now mysteriously gone! (See Shot 3)
- 7) Have Jack switch back the position of the heal berry with the medicine (the empty space). (See Shot 4)
- 8) Have Cecilia defend (See Shot 5)
- 9) In the third round, check-out the inventory-now you have 255 medicines!!! (See Shot 6)

IMPORTANT...

Use the same procedure for other items that can be bought and sold, such as apples/secret signs/ambrosia. However: You should try to sell off at least 156 of the 255 items everytime (in other words stay below 100), because the game tends to crash otherwise. Enjoy the free stuff!



LOOK OUT



SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE

Secret Character Codes!

First make sure the game is on Medium mode. Then at name entry, type in the following: **_Wampa Stompa**

Make sure there's one space before Wampa, and two before Stompa, and that both words are capitalized (as shown). You must also choose 'Traditional' as your control set-up.

O.K., now enter the level of choice and punch in the following: **For the Wampa:** Press left on the d-pad and the right 'C' button simultaneously, then up on the d-pad and the right 'C' button.

For the AT-ST: Press left on the d-pad and the right 'C' button simultaneously, then up on the d-pad and the right 'C' button.

For the Stormtrooper: Press right on the d-pad and the right 'C' button simultaneously, then up on the d-pad and the right 'C' button simultaneously.

The d-pad controls the enemy characters!





MACHINE SELECT

SIR

HORSEPOWER 130
TORQUE 14.1
LENGTH 4070
WEIGHT 1040
FUEL 45



SIR

SELECT EXIT
← & → BUTTON
○ BUTTON

MACHINE SELECT

NSR

HORSEPOWER 250
TORQUE 30.0
LENGTH 4430
WEIGHT 1230
FUEL 70



NSR

SELECT EXIT
← & → BUTTON
○ BUTTON

MACHINE SELECT

GTR

HORSEPOWER 280
TORQUE 37.3
LENGTH 4675
WEIGHT 1500
FUEL 65



GTR

SELECT EXIT
← & → BUTTON
○ BUTTON

MACHINE SELECT

BUS

HORSEPOWER 235
TORQUE 66.1
LENGTH 11250
WEIGHT 12130
FUEL 120



BUS

SELECT EXIT
← & → BUTTON
○ BUTTON

MACHINE SELECT

DSH

HORSEPOWER 1
TORQUE 0-1
LENGTH 200
WEIGHT 1
FUEL 1



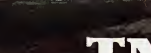
DSH

SELECT EXIT
← & → BUTTON
○ BUTTON

MACHINE SELECT

TNK

HORSEPOWER 1500
TORQUE 85.6
LENGTH 9800
WEIGHT 50000
FUEL 500



TNK

SELECT EXIT
← & → BUTTON
○ BUTTON

MACHINE SELECT

PLC

HORSEPOWER 820
TORQUE 85.6
LENGTH 5825
WEIGHT 1820
FUEL 60



PLC

SELECT EXIT
← & → BUTTON
○ BUTTON

MACHINE SELECT

19A

HORSEPOWER 700
TORQUE 45.3
LENGTH 4130
WEIGHT 600
FUEL 130



19A

SELECT EXIT
← & → BUTTON
○ BUTTON

MACHINE SELECT

RSP

HORSEPOWER 200
TORQUE 42.8
LENGTH 8860
WEIGHT 9025
FUEL 100



RSP

SELECT EXIT
← & → BUTTON
○ BUTTON

MACHINE SELECT

TRD

HORSEPOWER 230
TORQUE 49.5
LENGTH 6620
WEIGHT 3600
FUEL 80



TRD

SELECT EXIT
← & → BUTTON
○ BUTTON

The REUBUS REPORT Presents:

"WELCOME TO THE LOT!"

"See anything you like? Feel free to kick the tires, but not too hard... That one in the corner? Think you can handle it? Of course I can handle it, I'm Reibus! That little ELS? Good choice, I used that one to get most of the others you see here... Well, just come into my office and fill out these forms and we'll see what we can do!"

Seriously, though, *Runabout* (to be called *Felony 11-79* when it's released here in the States) is a fun bit of driving. Though you start off with only four cars, you eventually get 22 to choose from, and here's how to do it:

● First, by beating each track in under the time limit, you'll get two cars per track... **SIR** & **NSR** for Down Town — **GTR** & **BUS** for Sea Side — **LIM** & **DAM** for Metro City. You're up to 10 cars!

● Second, do it faster! Beat each course in under four minutes and get another car for each. **FD7**, **GT1**, and **TAC**, in that order. Now you've got a total of 13 cars!

● Next up: DAMAGE!!! You've got to beat each track again, this time causing a certain dollar amount of damage. Down Town: \$1,000,000 gets you the **GTS**. I recommend going mostly for the buses and police cars—they yield more cash than the others. Sea Side: \$2,500,000 this time, for the **ELS**. Scarcity of funds isn't the problem on this one, as there's lots of fuel trucks and cop cars around. The problem is finishing on time using a vehicle that's tough enough to take the amount of punishment you've got to dish out to reach the mark! Metro City: Again \$2,500,000 is the target, yielding the **360**. Finding the two subway tunnels is the key here: Each of the two trains is worth a million bucks! 16 total so far! 6 cars to go!

● By now you may have accomplished the next objective: By going as fast as you can at the beginning of the Sea Side track, you should see "xxx Km/h over limit" appear on the screen as you head up the hill after the first hard left. By reaching 180 Km/h and then 230 Km/h (and finishing within the limit) you'll get the coveted **TRD** and the **RSP** (yippee.). But only 4 more!

● Okay, now the tough part: One more car per track is gained by finishing (within the time limit) with ZERO dollars. That's right, no damage done to anything... You can still hit things that have no dollar value (walls, etc.), though. Cars obtained are: the **19A**(YEAH!), **PLC** and **TNK**, in that order. One car left...

● Now all that's left is to find the **DSH**. Go into the building at the end of Metro City and destroy the showcases along the left wall. There's a small case at the end of the row, and you should see "Mini 4WD" appear when you've got it! All 22 cars!

And that's it! In my quest for that last car, I managed some pretty amazing track times (like 2'42"83 in Metro City!) before finally finding it in a fit of trying to destroy everything!



MACHINE SELECT

LIM

HORSEPOWER 275
TORQUE 41.5
LENGTH 8326
WEIGHT 2880
FUEL 100



LIM

SELECT EXIT
← & → BUTTON
○ BUTTON

MACHINE SELECT

DAM

HORSEPOWER 385
TORQUE 141.5
LENGTH 8024
WEIGHT 10330
FUEL 150



DAM

SELECT EXIT
← & → BUTTON
○ BUTTON

MACHINE SELECT

FD7

HORSEPOWER 255
TORQUE 30.9
LENGTH 5825
WEIGHT 1290
FUEL 76



FD7

SELECT EXIT
← & → BUTTON
○ BUTTON

MACHINE SELECT

GT1

HORSEPOWER 800
TORQUE 50.4
LENGTH 4675
WEIGHT 1500
FUEL 65



GT1

SELECT EXIT
← & → BUTTON
○ BUTTON

MACHINE SELECT

TAC

HORSEPOWER 375
TORQUE 36.8
LENGTH 4140
WEIGHT 1065
FUEL 72



TAC

SELECT EXIT
← & → BUTTON
○ BUTTON

MACHINE SELECT

360

HORSEPOWER 16
TORQUE 2.9
LENGTH 2942
WEIGHT 640
FUEL 55



360

SELECT EXIT
← & → BUTTON
○ BUTTON

MACHINE SELECT

ELS

HORSEPOWER 118
TORQUE 16.8
LENGTH 3726
WEIGHT 690
FUEL 50



ELS

SELECT EXIT
← & → BUTTON
○ BUTTON

MACHINE SELECT

GTS

HORSEPOWER 450
TORQUE 66.1
LENGTH 4450
WEIGHT 1370
FUEL 70



GTS

SELECT EXIT
← & → BUTTON
○ BUTTON

THIS HAS BEEN THE REUBUS REPORT. WE NOW RETURN YOU TO YOUR REGULARLY SCHEDULED MAGAZINE...



HEXEN 64
Cheat Menu!

First Prize Winner
JIM BELLEND



Another Hexen
Cheat Menu!



At the pause menu press:
Top 'C', Bottom 'C', Left 'C', Right 'C'
"Cheat" should appear at the bottom of the screen.
Input the following quickly in the Cheat Menu.
GOD MODE: Left 'C', Right 'C', Bottom 'C'

LEVEL SELECT: Left 'C', Left 'C', Right 'C', Right 'C', Bottom 'C', Top 'C'

BUTCHER: (instant kill): Bottom 'C', Top 'C', Left 'C', Left 'C'

HEALTH: Left 'C', Top 'C', Bottom 'C', Bottom 'C'

And in the "Collect" menu...

ALL KEYS: Bottom 'C', Top 'C', Left 'C', Right 'C'

ALL ARTIFACTS: Top 'C', Right 'C', Bottom 'C', Top 'C'

ALL WEAPONS: Right 'C', Top 'C', Bottom 'C', Bottom 'C'

TID BITS AND GAME SHARK CODES

Hexen-PS-Cheat Menu:

At the controller setup screen in the options press and hold R2, then press Right, Down, Right, Triangle, X

-SKTBOY@Internet

Rage Racer-PS-Game Shark:

Infinite Money- 8019C610 FFFF
Infinite Continues- 801E3FFA 0005
Infinite Time- 8009ACA4 06C5

-Jonas Jubida, BC

Tail of the Sun-PS-Game Shark:

Spear #1: 800C5528 0009
Spear #2: 800CA08C 0009
Completed Tower: 800CA0A0 00FF

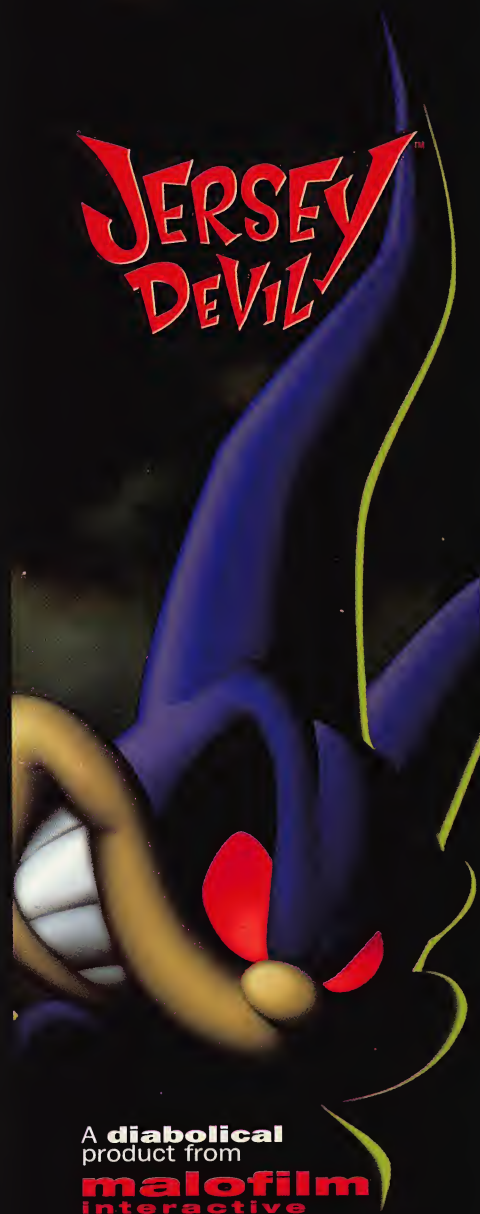
Wild Arms-PS-Game Shark:

Quick level Gain: 8016403C FFFF

-Mathew Woods, CO

UNLEASHED
THIS
SEPTEMBER

JERSEY
DEVIL™



A diabolical
product from
malofilm
Interactive

VIDEO POLITICS

Legend
Graphics
Control
Play mechanics
Music
Originality



TREASURES OF THE DEEP
GAME OF THE MONTH

Treasures of the Deep
PlayStation
Namco
Adventure

Black Ops has shown once and for all that they have superior skills. Easily their best game ever, Namco smartly snatched it up for a powerful launch. *Treasures* is as involved a 3D adventure you'll ever find, and it requires the utmost skills to master, with intricate mission ops, a masterful set-up mode and beautiful underwater 3D. In this game you really feel the current. The play mechanics are first rate, the music's right there and it never gets boring. Huge props must be distributed to Black Ops!

G **C** **P** **M** **O** **95**

Now this is what video-gaming is all about. 14 stages of engaging underwater action, as a gold-hunting expedition turns into an involving quest for a secret submerged kingdom. There's loads of subs to choose from, really cool weapons, supreme light-sourcing and awesome mutated bosses. The secret level is so cool, I can't even bring myself to reveal it. And of course, if you get bored playing as a diver, you can always enter the monstrously cool bonus game where you're one minute to chomp your way through as many divers, seals and manta rays as possible... as a gigantic Great White Shark!! *TOTD* - The way games should be made.

G **C** **P** **M** **O** **96**

Treasures of the Deep is definitely a big leap forward for Black Ops! All of the extremely realistic underwater environments would have made Jacques Cousteau proud. The feeling of being underwater is *practically* realistic (although the jerky controls caused me problems) but a better frame rate probably could have added more realism (then again, I don't do much diving). If you're into easy listening, you can enjoy some choice tunes in the earlier levels of *Treasures*. An extremely original game, but before you know it, BLAM! You've beaten it and you're exchanging it at your friendly neighborhood toy store. To bad there weren't more levels...

G **C** **P** **M** **O** **90**

Felony 11-79
PlayStation
ASCII
Racing/Destruction

Climax has made a bold departure this time and shocked me to the very core with a racing crush-fest that feels so good it's like they've been making them for decades. Truly the most original driving experience out there—the premise of being chased constantly and getting paid to bring about mass destruction is brilliant. And it's executed perfectly. It's all over too soon but man is it a fun ride! I will return often, oh yes, I will.

G **C** **P** **M** **O** **88**

Fail to appear in court and you risk turning into a jewelry thief and crashing through 3 huge zones, with weaving traffic, pixelated pedestrians and multiple scenic structures to demolish. This cool slant on the usual racing genre works really well (for a couple of days, at least) as there's plenty of vehicles to find, and loads of carnage to cause. However, once you've figured out your best routes, and seen that only a couple of cars are actually decent to control, you'll begin to notice the glitching, pop-up and lack of longevity that this little unfortunately possesses. Insane fun while it lasts, though!

G **C** **P** **M** **O** **88**

Well, what can I say that these two yahoos to my left haven't already said? How about this: What's with the little green dude that runs away from you by the last phone booth in the Metro City course? Seriously, though, I had a good time with *Felony*, and spent a good week playing it every chance I got. Aside from some minor collision glitches, lots o' pop-up, and the less-than-memorable music, *Felony*'s lots of fun. But, as you hear from the two chiefs here, once you've gotten all 22 cars, there's not much to go back to...

G **C** **P** **M** **O** **83**

Ogre Battle
PlayStation
Atlus
Strategy

Ah, *Ogre Battle*. Many profound memories. For me, Atlus/Artdink's PlayStation edition of Quest's *OB* is a welcome sight indeed, if only for the opportunity to play the game again, with its minor improvements. Though modern strategy RPGs (such as *Final Fantasy Tactics*, by the same team that created *Ogre Battle*) trounce this game, it's still a nostalgic good time. For those of you who've never tried it or couldn't find the SNES version, I give this piece of gaming history my highest recommendation.

G **C** **P** **M** **O** **80**

In the face of bigger and more complex strategy titles available today on PS (I'm thinking *Vandal Hearts*), does an old-yet-solid SNES game stand up under the pressure? While *OB* has been ever-so-slightly tweaked graphically (polygonal BGs during battle, more elaborate spell effects) this is basically the SNES version with a mid-battle save feature. If it's true that the original 16-bit *Ogre Battle* is a hard game to find, then this is an absolute godsend for those who always wanted to try *OB* but couldn't.

G **C** **P** **M** **O** **77**

Everyone bear in mind that this is simply a 32-bit version of the original SNES *Ogre Battle* game. Don't expect PS wonders at every turn, 'cause you won't find 'em. The battle scenes offer polygonal backgrounds now, that's cool, and the spells have been enhanced for 32-bit, but you'll see SNES graphics everywhere else (including the one-time-gee-wiz Mode 7 map screen simple character sprites, and PCM tunes). Look at it this way: The game's really cool. A must-have battle RPG in fact. It looks a little better now, sounds a little clearer, and it's on your PS. I especially recommend *Ogre* newcomers give it a try.

G **C** **P** **M** **O** **82**

Syndicate Wars
PlayStation
EA
Strategy

Finally! The very first game I really wanted for my PlayStation (about two years ago) has arrived. Unfortunately, it's not quite the epic experience I was hoping for. Don't get me wrong: As a *Syndicate* fan, the latest version certainly gets my blood pumping in the theme department (That's right! Kill the troublemakers!), but the new graphical engine and control scheme fail to impress in many ways (ie, the cool new features are almost overwhelmed by the problems they cause). I do recommend *SW* to fans of the original though...

G **C** **P** **M** **O** **80**

For a game that's been in development as long as this one has, I was really expecting more graphically. The light sourcing is flashy and impressive and the rotating camera is fairly smooth, but the frame rate blows. On top of that, I'm really not a fan of PC flavored stuff—even if this version attempts to be more active, replacing point and click character movements with real time control. Admittedly, there is a lot of depth and strategy to this game—I simply didn't find it all that much fun.

G **C** **P** **M** **O** **74**

The PC hit finally makes its way to the PlayStation after about 2 years in the making. Guess what? Two years ago, these would have been great graphics, but now they are only good. And two years ago this would have been a very timely release, what with the hoorah surrounding the PC version. Now it's merely an unfulfilling conversion. True fans should note that the entire game is exact and intact, with beautiful FMV openings and intermissions as well as crystal clear voices and superb lighting effects. Ultimately I won't be playing *Syndicate Wars*, although I tried to get involved several times. The interface is too 'PC choppy and awkward, if you know what I mean.

G **C** **P** **M** **O** **67**

Machine Hunter
PlayStation
MGM
Shooting/Adventure

Beyond *Re-Loaded* (with play mechanics) lies *Machine Hunter*. Top down 3D the way it oughta be! Besides eye-popping graphics and tight control, *MH* features multiple planes, more than a few puzzles and a relentless goo fest that keeps on giving. While this isn't my favorite genre I'd buy this one regardless. Playing host to (or should I say in) so many creatures sets *MH* apart. Come prepared though this road's not easily travelled.

G **C** **P** **M** **O** **80**

First it was called *HOST*, then *Droid Hunter*, and then finally *Machine Hunter*. Whatever the reason for this game's identity crisis, *MH* is a little better in some respects than the game which so obviously inspired it, *Loaded*. The levels are more interesting and varied in design, the two player mode is handled in a far more manageable split screen, and the whole affair just seems a little smoother. This game's biggest downfall is the inordinate amount of shots it takes to neutralize a controllable mech. This detracts from the pure shooting fun that a game like this should be all about.

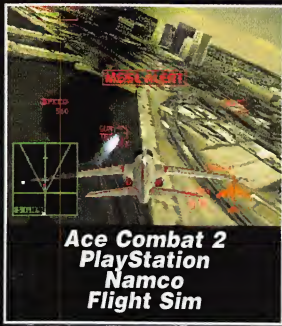
G **C** **P** **M** **O** **83**

Here's the definitive word on *Machine Hunter*, starting with the 3D engine. I've done everything in my power to test this engine; filled the screen with tons of enemies, constant explosions—even in the cool split-screen mode—and it refuses to drop below 24 to 30 fps. Good. Rock solid gameplay too. Countless enemies, satisfying carnage, power-ups, even perfect control. Even the level design is awesome. Huge multi-level overhead environments, playable with fixed or rotating cameras, loads of backgrounds and cool effect-hidden elements like liquid fire pits. One gripe: Certain enemies take way too many hits to go down. You'll just have to be hard-core then, eh?

G **C** **P** **M** **O** **85**



ONLY ONE MAN
CAN SEND THE
FORCES OF DARKNESS
BACK TO HELL...



Ace Combat 2
PlayStation
Namco
Flight Sim

Ace Combat 2 has two things in common with the original... the words *Ace* and *Combat*. The rest of it is a hard core 3D aerial assault the likes of which we have never seen on the PlayStation. From the ease of gameplay to the slick interface and burnin' soundtrack, *Ace 2* is everything you could ask for. The game's plenty deep as well. Aside from the vast quiver of available planes, secrets galore are buried as well. Bloody good show, Namco!

G C P M O 90
8 9 9 8 6

More than 20 levels of intense arcade-style air-to-air combat await! You've got your fancy analog control, your slick well-presented intro and attract screens, the cool smoke-trails on your missiles, and some degree of difference between your dogfighting missions. Control is a little sluggish, even with the most nimble and top-secret aircraft, and the stages are essentially the same (fire missiles at targets and watch them explode), but the intensity of it all makes *AC2* a worthy purchase.

G C P M O 92
9 8 9 8 8

Being a big fan of Namco's original *Ace Combat*, I was looking forward to *AC2* quite a lot. Thankfully, I've not been disappointed. The graphics have been much improved and the addition of analog pad support imparts a newfound fluidity to the flying action. But even without the analog pad, the game plays incredibly well and blasting enemy targets is fun and satisfying. *AC2*'s quality is what I've come to expect from Namco—the very best. I could do without the guitar-heavy soundtrack, but that's just me.

G C P M O 89
8 8 7 8 8



Mortal Kombat Trilogy
Saturn
Midway
Fighting

Since me and Mileena broke it off, I find it hard to look at her having such a wonderful time ripping people's guts out, but alas, life must go on. *MK*, the game that spawned a thousand sequels, rests in peace on the Sega Saturn with chilling animation, frightful sights and sounds, and a soundtrack to stalk by. Reminds me of home, you know (sob). Pass the chalice, me brutha', I'm all choked up.

G C P M O 79
8 8 8 8 7

MKT is an excellent translation in terms of arcade-to-Saturn conversions. The music is excellent (it better be, it's a freakin' CD for crying out loud!), and all of the characters from every single *MK* game are included in this game. The only drawbacks are the loading, which is very long (when you play Shang it loads even longer), and the game slows down when too much action is happening on screen. These little problems are only minor, but if you compare all versions of *MKT*, and had to rate them, I'd still hang with the N64 version (no loading!).

G C P M O 55
6 6 7 8 3

Hey look! It's *MK Trilogy* on the Saturn, right on time! Never before has a home release been so timely! Anyway, *MK Trilogy* is pretty good on the Saturn. All the play modes are intact, every character, boss or otherwise, is in this version, and they're well animated and very controllable. The game has the most minor of slow-down problems, usually during a Kintaro fight when lots of projectiles are bouncing around the screen (but it's tolerable). The options and play modes are identical to the N64 and PS versions, so there's a decent amount of gameplay, and the loading is short. Saturn owners, here you go.

G C P M O 78
7 7 8 8 9



Sky Target
Saturn
Sega
Shooting

Part of me says *been there, done that*, while the other part says, *well, maybe it's worth doing again*. Turns out it's really not unless you live for 3D shooting. *Sky Target*'s a decent conversion but I just don't see the point in bringing it over when gems like *Psychic Warlock* are collecting dust in Japan. I suppose when the well is dry even a sip can quench, but I'm lookin' for the 2-liter size.

G C P M O 65
7 7 6 7 6

Personally I think this is a lame translation. Lately I've been shocked by Sega's first-party arcade ports (i.e., *Last Bronx*), but *Sky Target* is so very weak. Except for the canyon stages, the graphics are mostly bad, plagued by clipping issues and poor textures. The frame rate is good enough, but unfortunately this only means it's smooth and ugly. If you're still hangin' on for gameplay, well, it's here. All the *After Burner*-wannabe thrills you could ever ask for (oh yeah). If you pick up *Sky Target*, do it for the soundtrack—it's more entertaining than the game itself.

G C P M O 68
6 7 7 8 5

Sega's polygonal *AfterBurner* update fares a little worse than other arcade-to-Saturn conversions. Granted, translating from Model 2 is no small feat, but games like *Rally*, *Virtual On*, and *VF2* show that the Saturn version need not look poor. On the contrary, they look quite good. *Sky Target* falters however, as the 3D in this game looks a bit rough. With that said, you must play this game at least once just to hear the most bizarre boss music ever. Powhaaawhaaaaaaaa!

G C P M O 77
7 8 7 7 7



Multi Racing Championship
Nintendo 64
Ocean
Racing

MRC, the first serious N64 racer, doesn't exactly thrill me, but it did keep my thumb glued to the Nintendo wand for a good many hours. Cleverly disguising the London Fog that so badly tries to creep in, Ocean's kept it pretty clean. The control is well thought out with power-slides aplenty and the difficulty is just right for advanced speed demons like myself. The music's actually pretty decent too, although so far, the sounds of the N64 have not rocked my world.

G C P M O 78
8 8 8 7 6

I haven't played such a good racing game since *Rage Racer*, but *Mullit* just blows it away. The graphics are a bit grainy, but the control is perfectly precise due to the analog controller. *MRC* is a bit of a *Rage Racer/Sega Rally* rip-off, but that's okay by me because Ocean does a great job of capturing both games in one package. The only drawback was that the game was a little too easy to beat, but I guess that's why they included a two-player mode. Ah, this game lasts forever!

G C P M O 89
9 9 9 9 4

Woohoo, another Nintendo 64 release!! Time to dust off my N64, adjust my mutant fingers to that strange three-pronged pad I remembered using the last time an N64 game got released, and it's off to the track I go! Fortunately, Nintendo actually employed quality control for this release, and the result is a fine arcade-style racer in the style of Namco's finest. Cool analog control, three intense stages with oodles of secrets to discover, an excellent two-player mode... but the whole experience ends way too soon. And that gosh-darned misty 'barbeque' effect ruined my day...

G C P M O 88
8 9 8 7 6



Salamander Deluxe Pack
Saturn (import)
Konami
Shooting

You have to ask yourself, if Konami is going to resurrect a classic for play on the PS, why not resurrect *Castlevania* or better yet, *Xexex*. I suppose there are still a few old timers that crave the joy that *Salamander* (circa 1986) brings. However, I doubt there are many next-generators that need *Salamander 2*, a coin-op few even know about, unless you fancy beating a game in 18 minutes like me. It seems that re-releases never swing my way. Is it just me?

G C P M O 60
5 8 7 7 5

I don't get it. What's wrong with *Salamander 2*? You can't fault the original *Salamander* and *Life Force*, as they're perfect, classic games. *Salamander 2*, however, is an advanced arcade game from 1996, and it rocks with skill. It's very refreshing to play a new, 32-bit non-*Parodius* or *Twinbee* Konami shooter that hearkens back to the glory days. Massive, huge respect to Konami for this title, and even more props for their decision to bring it out in the US.

G C P M O 94
9 9 9 9 3

Now this is perfection! Not only are these shooters classics that've finally been perfectly translated, *Life Force* and *Salamander* have never looked better (especially since there's no flicker like in the NES versions), and Konami went the extra mile to keep us even more in awe, by adding *Salamander 2*. This sequel is amazing in terms of graphics, gameplay and music. Konami left almost nothing out of this game (except for maybe some more levels added to the older games) but that's a small price to pay for three games in one! Respect to Konami for caring.

G C P M O 94
9 9 9 9 4



D-XHIRD
Saturn (import)
Takara
Fighting

D-Xhird, from the super talented team that brought us *Crusader of Centy* and *Ranger X*, is by SS standards a good 3D fighter. It's got solid polys, cool BGs and a nice array of fighters, but you can feel from play one that these guys just aren't cut out to develop fighting games. I'd rather be playing a 32-bit version of *Ranger X* personally. It really doesn't matter since the chance of a US release is nil. If you do happen across it, beware, the music is downright porn. Play it low.

G C P M O 68
7 7 7 2 5

Nextech. Respect *Ranger X*, *Ragna-cenry*, and even, to a lesser degree, *Linkle Liver Story*. Don't respect *D-Xhird*. Though it has decent graphics and very cool character design, the game itself is stiff and poor. You must laugh at the "light sourcing" which is, in fact, just brighter textures replacing the regular ones for the duration of one frame. Let's have fun pronouncing the name of the game, too. "Dee Eus Herd," perhaps? "Dee Jerd?" The guy on the title screen clearly says, "Dee Third," yet the official pronunciation is "Dee Zard." Wow, this game is almost as fun as *D-Xhird* itself!!!

G C P M O 55
6 5 5 4 4

Wow! Another Takara-published 3D fighting game on the Saturn! My dreams have finally come true! Er... Well, to be totally fair, *D-Xhird* certainly isn't the worst fighting game I've seen on the Saturn, but it does have its problems. The graphics are a bit shoddy, the characters are too stiff and the pseudo-"light sourcing" is almost humorous. On the other hand, the play mechanics seem solid enough and the characters are quite cool, but with games like *Last Bronx* and *Dead or Alive* on the way, there's really no room on the Saturn roster for another moderate fighter. Not really worth importing, if you ask me...

G C P M O 65
6 6 8 2 6

KULL ROCKS

KEVIN SORBO

KULL

THE CONQUEROR

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READ THE TOR BOOK PRODUCTION BENJAMIN FERNANDEZ DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY RODNEY CHARTERS CO-PRODUCER HESTER HARGETT SCREENPLAY BY CHARLES EDWARD POGUE
PRODUCED BY RAFFAELLA DE LAURENTIIS DIRECTED BY JOHN NICOLELLA

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Some Material May Be Inappropriate for Children Under 13

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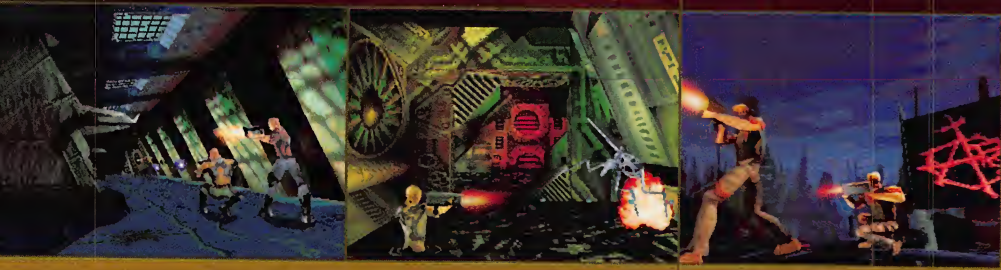
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...PLACED ABOVE THE



An original PlayStation™ game starring Bruce Willis as your virtual partner.

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ACTIVISION®

T h o u s h a l t k i l l

APOCALYPSE™

The end begins this Fall.

H O L Y S H



FIGHTING FORCE

THE ULTIMATE STREET BATTLE!

**EXCLUSIVE COVER STORY SHOCKER!!
FIGHT INSANITY ON PLAYSTATION –
AND GAMEFAN HAS IT FIRST!**

Doctor Zeng shifted his not inconsiderable bulk around his cavernous hideout, pacing up and down in a constant state of rage. "Grah!!" he bellowed at his female servant, Snapper, "The world was about to end and NOTHING HAPPENED!!" An antique Ming jar flew across Zeng's office and smashed into a side wall. "My job has become oh so clear, my concubine! I shall end the world NOW!! At any cost!!!"

The 21st Century had certainly started with a bang, with millions throughout the world in a state of euphoric riot and partying. However, for the crazed Dr. Zeng, 12:01 a.m. on January 1st, 2000 was a black day indeed. This ex-professor of theology and renowned radical scientist had read the works of Aristotle, Plato, Nostradamus, Isaac Newton, the Bible and countless other texts, and all of them had pointed to the end of the world at the beginning of the new millennium...

at least, when Zeng's deranged mind had twisted every single meaning to fit into his demented hypotheses. Zeng is the Keeper of the Earth (at least, that's what he keeps telling anyone who'll listen), and when Mother Nature doesn't take care of business, Dr. Zeng takes control!

After calling a general meeting of all his followers, he patiently tells them that "brothers and sisters, the END is most definitely NIGH!!" and begins to correct the 'mistake'. His followers are whooped into a state of sexual frenzy by

this smooth and tough-talking tyrant, and after a quick session of deviant cuckoldry, Zeng enters his special 'sex dungeon' to prepare his genocidal concoction. Using a mixture of

HAWK MANSON

FREEDOM FIGHTING MERCENARY

Age: 26 Height: 6' 2" Weight: 196lbs
Hair: Blonde Eyes: Blue Biceps: 36"
Chest: 48" Neck: 20" IQ: 187

"Yeah, I'm an ex freedom fighter and peaceful protester, but hey, I finally figured out that good guys finish last, and rough, no-nonsense, grizzled mercenaries have all the fun. Guess which profession I took up? Jeeyah, you got that right! Well, that Mace Daniels came a calling. If you call pinning me up against a wall and attacking me 'calling'. Said she had some work for me. Hey, fighting side-by-side with someone has never been this much fun! I gotta tell ya, when she slices through a foe's cranium with her vibro-knife, it stirs me like nothing else on this earth! Just what is that fragrance she's wearing...? It's driving me to distraction, I tell ya... Okay, enough chatter. Let's kick some ass!"



HAWK

LSD and a new drug known as Biothene, Zeng formulates a new killer liquid, and intends to deposit it in the water systems of the world's major conurbations. Many of his own followers have unknowingly digested this deadly liquid, and after a maddening zombie like state, have died a long and lingering (not to mention unbelievably painful) death.

Only Zeng's concubine, Snapper, knows the full extent of this potential disaster. She quietly slips from her shackles and secretly communicates with a member of a secret Fighting Force of private investigators and mercenaries for hire. No amount of Zeng's money is worth the mass destruction of the Earth's inhabitants. After leaving a coded message at four secret addresses, she returns to Zeng's lair, and hopes they arrive in time.



HARDCORE HARD FIGHTING!



The scene is set for what may be the greatest multiple foe beat 'em up since *Final Fight*. A completely manic and over-the-top story. Four kick-ass fighting pugilists with massive pounding moves at their disposal. Countless suited enemies, slinky babes brandishing machetes, nutters on motorcycles, cyborgs, mutants and even the general public all turning swiftly towards you with thoughts of murder. The maddest video game boss since Geese Howard. Huge flowing pantaloons (okay, maybe not the pantaloons). Those now-infamous sex dungeons (although I'm doubtful they'll appear in the actual game). More features than you can shake a piece of lead piping at. And at the heart of it all, a finely tuned, well honed highly intricate



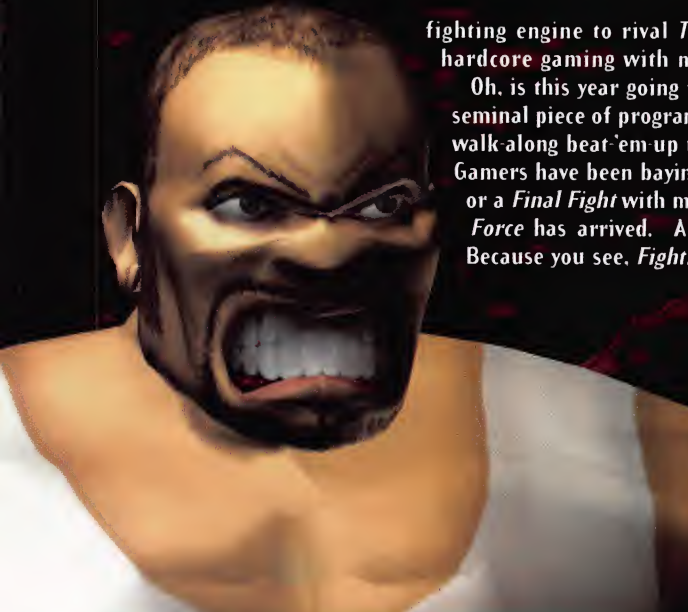
MACE



MACE DANIELS

KILLER FEMALE PRIVATE EYE
 Age: 21 Height: 5'7" Weight: 126lbs
 Hair: Blonde Eyes: Green
 Vitals: 38-22-38 IQ: 187

"You got a problem and need the feminine perspective on Private Investigating? Well, look elsewhere you sap, or I'll slit you from belly to neck! But hey, you look kinda lost and alone... c'mere and I'll tell ya the plan... Sit over there... don't be nervous. I don't bite... without finishing the job! Okay, Slapper has confessed everything to me about that crazed lunatic Zeng. I can't believe what she told me, but then Zeng's always been unhinged. So... yeah, Snapper told me Zeng's plan and I'm out to stop him. If I encounter danger along the way, then so much the better! Just as long as I get my reward at the end of it. Hey, you know, that Hawk Manson's kinda cute... I'll show him what a real woman's all about! You coming along for the ride?"



fighting engine to rival *Tekken's*... This is the world of *Fighting Force*... said to be a festival of intense hardcore gaming with no equal. I took to the mean streets to find out more...

Oh, is this year going to be massive for Core Design, or what?! Proving that *Tomb Raider 2* isn't the only seminal piece of programming they're releasing, Core are intent to stride over the competition with a superb walk-along beat-'em-up that nearly fills up the one remaining genre that the PlayStation hasn't covered yet. Gamers have been baying for years about a 32 bit version of *Streets of Rage*, a *Die Hard* Arcade demolisher or a *Final Fight* with more extreme clout than any 16 bit predecessor. And now the day has come. *Fighting Force* has arrived. And gamers can punch, kick, grapple and generally scrap away like never before. Because you see, *Fighting Force* promises to be a whole lot more than *Double Dragon* in 3D...



FACE OFF IN THE BATTLE ARENA!



The reasons why become apparent from the very first second you start

your monumental trek through the violence of Dr. Zeng's city. Firstly, you can go anywhere; whether it's directly onto a freeway full of speeding cars, through a garage full of breakable vehicles, or into an juddering elevator, the whole of the level can be investigated and remains fully interactive. Pieces of pipe can be wrenched from railings and used to batter people senseless. Cars can be struck repeatedly with fists or feet until they crumple and explode (listen as the car alarms wail before slowing down after the car gets demolished!). gates can be blown apart by massive bazookas, and even drink machines can be destroyed for that much-needed soda boost! Of course, such interaction has never been so spectacularly shown in a video game, and the extra detail we've seen so far is only from the first set of levels! There's ten massive zones to battle through and a total of 25 spectacular stages, so you can imagine the items you'll be grabbing and the special effects you'll be encountering further into the game. Later, you'll be treated to melee combat on airships, through office buildings, into the 'Bronx' and finally past a submarine and onto Dr. Zeng's personal island of terror. And of course, as you'd expect for a game of

BEN JACKSON

PRISON POPULATION CONTROL

Age: 29 Height: 6' 5" Weight: 280lbs
Hair: Green Eyes: Hazel Biceps: 48"
Chest: 60" Neck: 26" IQ: 106

"That Hawk Manson came down to my cell the other day. Said he had a 'job' for me. Sounds kind of... interesting. Wonder what the governor thinks. She's keeping me in here for prison population control. I crush heads into pulp and eat the entrails of the jailbirds I take objection to. The prison quacks reckon I've got special powers. Naah, can't see it myself. Doesn't everyone get bathed in a storm of translucent pyrotechnics every time they get enraged? I like it when they send me out into the real world. I get to squash people. Lots of people. Those prison guards have left my security cuffs on for this special under operation. Hawk sez he's gonna break me loose after the mission. He'd better. I got a killing frenzy and he's next for the chop."

**INCREDIBLE FIRST SHOTS OF THE BATTLE ARENA MODE!
WITNESS THE POWER! YEAH. PROPS!**

SMASHER

this caliber, you've multiple routes to take, multiple enemies to cull, and multiple items to use with extreme prejudice...

With a title of this perceived quality, there's not only a mass of walkways, alleys and roads to traverse, but a whole load of bad folk to 'interact' with. In fact, there's a whole Titanic crew of roller blading babes, gang members, street punks, military personnel, guards, wet suit

ed women (er...uhuh huh), jetpack dudes, and six main bosses to go one on one with. Is that a diverse enough cast for ya?!

Of course, when you're engaging the CPU bad guys, you'll want a divergent choice in the method of your brutal put down, and this is where the *Tekken* inspired close combat comes into play! In fact, so sure are the developers that the battles can (and will) be different each time you encounter a separate foe, that they've included a special arena mode (which I'll exclusively reveal more on later into this preview). Firstly, each character has different attributes from his/her brethren, enabling certain characters to reach areas of the game that others cannot.



TWO PLAYERS DUKE IT OUT!

**TWO PLAYERS CAN TEAM UP AND TAKE ON THE BAD GUYS!
DR. ZENG MUST BE STOPPED. DO YOU POSSESS THE SKILL?**

Secondly, each of the four heroes for hire have between 40 and 50 different fighting techniques. Such a diverse number of throws, grapples and punch/kick combinations has never been seen in a game such as this, and it means that you're essentially controlling a true fighting character with different throws, grapples and punching techniques depending on your joypad waggling. Add to this a special 'devastator' attack for each character (like Mike Haggar's clothesline in *Final Fight*) and you've got the classic features of old-school beat 'em-ups spliced with the combos of today's finest fighters.

So what happens when you've spent your month of solid gaming beating this game in every conceivable way? Well, you enter the one-on-one Arena: a special mode where each player character can battle another in a fully-realized 3D zone of death! Choose your gruff no-nonsense ex-con or raver-babe and slap each other silly without those bothersome baddies getting in the way. Whether this is a car park (complete with bottles to smash over the head of your ex-friend) or a city street (with a crowd of shocked bystanders looking on), you can be sure of a great and varied fighting game when the *Die Hard* Arcade style gameplay has taken its toll on your sanity. This should finish the game completely and ensure that extra drop of gameplaying juice from a title already overflowing with features.

We'll be back with the definitive review of *Fighting Force* very shortly, but in the mean time, I'm polishing my knuckle-dusters and heading for Dr. Zeng's hideout. Come on! I'll take you all on!! **CH**



**MORE KICKIN' FIGHTING
FORCE ACTION IN
UPCOMING ISSUES.
KEEP IT HERE...
OR WE'LL SMASH YER!**

ALANA

ALANA MCKENDRICK

RAVER CHICK WITH INNER CHI

Age: 17 Height: 5' 5" Weight: 108lbs

Hair: Blonde Eyes: Blue

Vitals: 28-20-28 IQ: 420

"Hardcore Drum and Bass, mixed with a little Jungle. Yeah, that's my bag. No more school, I checked out the warehouse every Friday. That's where we hang. Hey, I don't need sleep when I'm up all night! Oh yeah, had to curtail those 'extra-curricular' activities after Mace told me the plan. Infiltrate Zeng's area. Crack some skulls. Yeah, I'm down for that. Hey, care for some gum? Ya know, that Zeng tried to recruit me? Damn, I've had some mind-expanding substances in my time, but the techniques he used on me... wooh! No way am I fathering a child of his! Ya see, I've got powers. Can't tell ya about them just yet, but just wait 'til ya see me in action! I crack heads like melons. No wonder I can't get a date... Heh Okay, gotta go wash my hair. Peace out.."

N I G H T M A R E

CREATURES

Things are most certainly going to go bump in the night for PlayStation owners this All Hallow's Eve, courtesy of Activision, their French development company Kalisto and the latest take on the 3D character adventure title. The game is the mysterious sleeper hit of the E3, a trek into dark terror in the brooding atmosphere of 19th century London. On October 31st, Activision hopes to coax active folk away from their apple-bobbing and candle rituals and into the texture-mapped world of the *Nightmare Creatures*. Snarling beasts and the dank dark

streets of an ancient capital city are waiting for you to wander round into a desperate fight for sanity and survival. With huge lolloping critters attacking with filthy talons waiting to be engaged and an underlying fear of dread throughout the entire experience, Chief Hambleton was more than willing to sport a deer-



SPIDERS!

THEY'LL SLURP YOUR MARROW THROUGH YOUR NOSTRILS!



stalker and winter cape, and head into the fog-filled capital of England.

Sherlock Holmes. Jack the Ripper. The Queen. Dudley. Tea and scones. Big Ben. Red buses. A dodgy underground. Cockney geezers. Rotting teeth. These are the images that instantly identify *Londonium*, and now, those US gamers have a chance to venture into parts of England's capital to experience some of the above attractions thanks to *Nightmare Creatures*. You see, Kalisto didn't just slap

together a series of interlocking corridors and drop in a couple of hundred critters and move on to their next project. No way. A huge amount of planning went into *Nightmare Creatures* to ensure that an overwhelming sense of atmosphere is created in this title. In fact, so overboard did Kalisto go, that they actually visited London, poured over actual maps of 19th Century London alleyways, tunnels and sewer systems in a public record office, and then re-drew them for the entire game. Every walkway, cobble-stone and creaking wooden door had a real-life equivalent back in 19th Century

Blighty. This creates an unbelievably enticing atmosphere when you first venture into the dark, knowing that the same streets were actually trodden on in the dim and distant past. These are the dank and foreboding alleys that Jack the Ripper prowled on, and you can almost hear a chirpy cockney barrowboy shouting "read all abahit it!" on a barrel of apples.

Except that the barrowboy would be a decaying corpse, of course. Because you see, *Nightmare Creatures* takes place in a London gone bad...

Instead of bustling streets, the entire area of North London (17 levels long at the moment) is deserted, save for a collection of other-worldly mutants and deviant offspring which shouldn't



THEIR POWERFUL LIMBS WILL TEAR YOU IN TWO!
BONE-BREAKING, NECK-SNAPPING SAILOR BOYS!

DOCKERS!

even be approached in a light alley, never mind a dark one. But approach them you must, for you are a skilled adventurer, ready to dish some damage and permanent death to the undead critters and flapping tentacle beasts residing here. So, off you'll stride, a huge weapon ready to inflict mammoth amounts of pain. Slowing to a creep, you'll notice how

clean (and authentic) the texture-maps on the scenery look, you'll marvel at the falling autumn leaves, gasp at the cool fog effects (you actually walk *through* fog rather than gaze at it in the distance!) and then cower in

fear at the lone creature shambling towards you in the distance. A two-seater carriage lies toppled onto one side; the remains of the horse lie twitching on the pavement. Running forward, you're startled by inhuman growling from a side passage. Recoiling in horror, a giant wolf creature leaps at you. Backing up, you swipe at it, and it howls in pain as you wrench it apart. Wiping the gore from your weapon, you continue into the dark...

Sounds cool, doesn't it? Well, prepare yourself for hours of fearfully intense gaming as you stalk through streets, sewer tunnels, graveyards, docks, outhouses and churches in search of horrors to cull. Grab items from fallen foes, locate special powers in wooden crates and try not to get yourself killed by the increasingly mutated beasts. The creatures present in this title certainly live up to their name; they're the largest assembled collection of undead, ethereal and downright mutated folk ever to shamble their way into a video game! If you thought the clan of *Resident Evil* critters were heinous enough, then prepare yourself for a full-on *Gwar* concert of frothing beastlings, screaming lunatics and mutated madmen!

Of course you've got your lowly zombie, werewolf and cloak-and-dagger fiend, but wait until you meet the flailing tentacles of the mutant stalking beasts, the giant chomping maw of the mammoth water Kraken, huge hulking golems and even a pustule-filled *thing* with three heads—two facing forwards and one peeping out of its back! What kind of madness is this?!

The game is touted as a *Tomb Raider*

WATCH YOUR SPINE GET
TORN OUT THROUGH
YOUR EARS!!

RAZOR-SHARP FANGS PIERCE SOFT EYE FLESH!

P
PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - KALISTO

OF PLAYERS - 1

PUBLISHER - ACTIVISION

DIFFICULTY - ADVANCED

FORMAT - CD

AVAILABLE - OCT. 31, 1997



**CHIEF
HAMBLETON**
What kind of
madness is this?!

MORE MONSTERS!

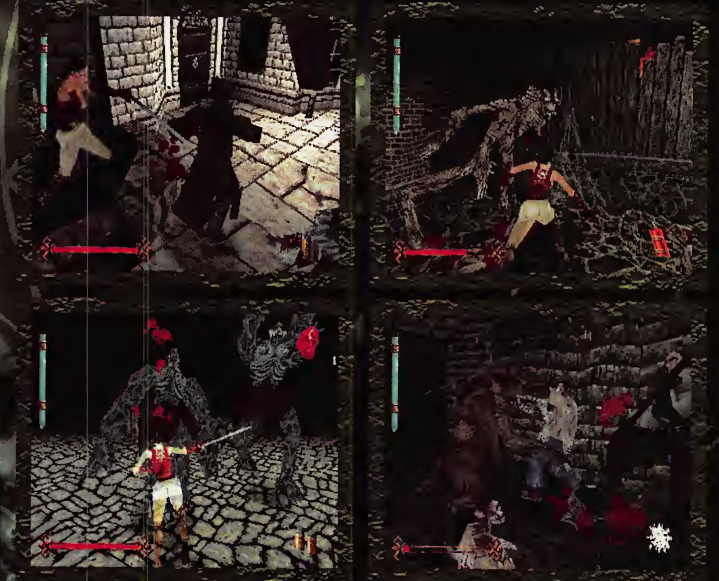


quest with fighting straight out of *Tekken*, but to be fair, it's more of a *Fighting Force* meets *Resident Evil* adventure; you're constantly searching for switches to open railed doorways and mincing opponents in bloody combat. Of course there's the more subtle effects present (whispering ethereal voices on the quite legendary soundtrack, shooting fiery flames with faces in them, and ghosts rising from their graves when you pass by), but the game relies mainly on action

(make that bloody melee), leading to constant adrenaline rushes, and magical antics courtesy of the game's numerous spells and other arcane artifacts. Taken as a whole package, *Nightmare Creatures* could be the most fear-inducing, stomach-churning, bowel-wrenching and downright intense hack-and-slash adventure ever seen on the PlayStation. Providing Activision adds some detail to the hit explosions (which look rather weak) and tweak the camera (which tends to spasm during the fraught fight scenes), I'll be the first down the old Queen's Head with a flagon of heavy ale, a packet of pork scratchings and a huge pointy stick to wave at those zombie hordes. Join me soon when *Nightmare Creatures* is next summoned... **CH**

HEY! WHERE IS THINE ARMY... OOPS!

Adventuring in Blighty can get mighty messy, especially when the combat gets as bloody as this! Instead of the usual quick slash of metal against skin resulting in an enemy gurgling a quick cough before thudding to the ground, we have slops of blood everywhere, limbs flying in all directions and enemy creatures which simply do not 'give up the ghost'. With a slice of your favored weapon, you can cleave any appendage from your advancing undead foe, whether it be an arm, a leg or a complete torso (and this results in some truly disgusting splitching noises and a death gurgle to chill you to the bone!). Of course, hacking a leg or an arm usually ends a fight... but not in this game! Prepare yourself for an enemy still alive and kicking! Not since *Monty Python's Holy Grail* have we seen such combat; enemies lose both arms and a leg and *still* keep on coming!



IGNATIUS AND NADIA - MONSTER DISPOSERS!

Entering the misty warrens of dank gloom and creeping terror are two heroes for hire; the mighty staff-wielding Ignatius and the mercenary maiden Nadia. As you'd expect, both adventurers are clad in the finest cloth outfits and have many ways to dispose of their mutated adversaries; in the shape of a huge weapon each. Ignatius favors bludgeoning his victims into small squishy pieces with a massive two-handed staff, whilst Nadia takes great delight in disemboweling her howling foes with an extremely sharp katana. As you'd expect, both landlopers have slightly different attributes; Nadia is fleet of foot, quick and nimble in combat (and back-flips out of harm's way), whilst Ignatius' constitution serves him well as he shrugs off even the heaviest slapping. One final note; Nadia's original name was even more in tune with the warrior amazon theme; we spoke in hushed tones of the female adventurer known only as... Shirley.

CLOCK TOWER™

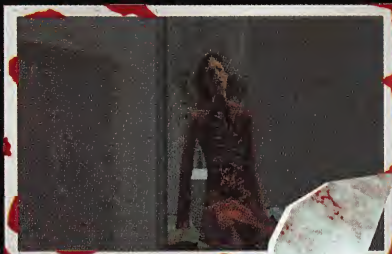
CRIMSON FOUNTAINS OF GORE



Mad Dog McGamer

A bright plume of warm crimson rain erupted as the giant scissors rent the flesh of his next victim... This is certainly not the game for the timid or weak of stomach! From corpses at your bedroom door to half eaten bodies in the restroom, ASCII Entertainment™, Inc. has packed Clock Tower™ to the belfry with some of the most gruesome and spectacular graphics of the year! Watch in horror as the limping gait of the

immortal Scissorman approaches your present hiding place — only to see the bright fountain of your own blood if he happens to find you! Any horror fan will quickly recognize the brilliance of the programmer's virtuoso performance in the lighting, shadowing, angles, and sheer volume of gruesome content! Lots of animation and full 3-D polygons were used to bring the bloody, murderous surroundings to life. This, in conjunction with the well detailed backgrounds and characters, will have you at the edge of your seat — praying that you make it through the night!

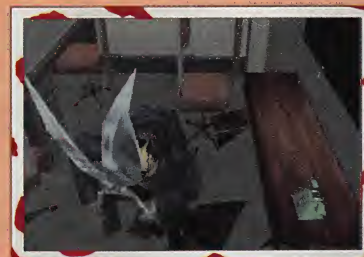


THE HORROR OF SILENCE

The chilling sound of the Banshee's scream itself couldn't have been more dreadful than the sound of the sheering scrape of sharpened steel blades sliding past each other — not to mention the wonderful effect of pure silence in some of the most chillingly tense scenes of the game. There's something terribly dreadful in the sound of your own two feet echoing through some of the most profoundly evil halls ever wrought, and I couldn't agree more with the programmers when they spoke of the "Terror of Sound" which they labored for in this game!

ASCII Entertainment's purpose in the sound scheme of this game is fairly easy to understand... with sounds that aren't there when they should be, sounds in impossible places, the chilling music of the chase, and the haunting scrape of the Scissorman himself as he stalks you with inhuman determination...they want to scare you out of your skin! Of course, the voice-overs and sound effects of the surrounding environments are a beautiful addition to the already impressive audio display. The tightly knit unison of background noise, voices, sound of movement, music, and silence create a living auditory atmosphere that will draw you into the world of terror on the screen right before you.

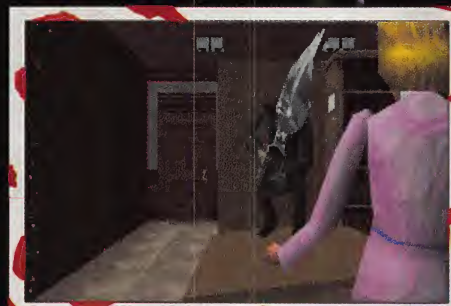
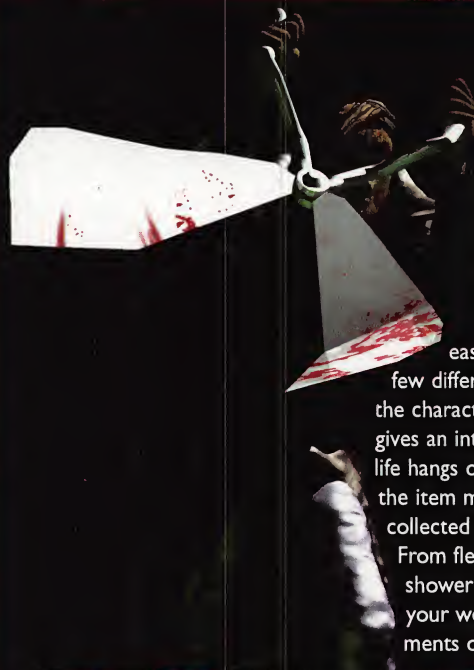
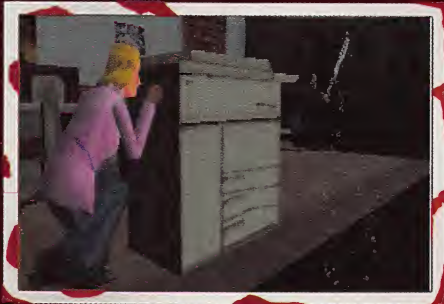
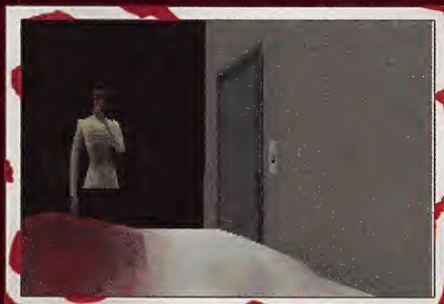
Terror gripped the hearts of the mixed party of ten as they finally reached the unholy walls of the Barrow's family mansion in England. No one could have imagined the unspeakable horrors that lay behind the infamous Scissorman case when the malevolent butcherings had begun. Now, the dreadful search for the answers had culminated into a lynching party that brought them all here, to the very doorstep of hell itself. Would they finally find the key to send this twisted soul back to the nether regions of death that had so maliciously spat him into their lives? ...only TIME will tell.



A TIME TO KILL

A series of brutal murders have signaled the return of one of the most terrifying killers in the history of Romsdaaren, Norway — Scissorman! Clock Tower starts out with an introduction of the supposed demise of the Scissorman ten years ago and then enters into the player controlled prologue where we are introduced to the characters. The new aspects of "the old monster in a spooky place" are added to by the inclusion of several implements of actual horror stories — including, interlude daytime scenes of detective work between nights of cold, brutal killing, as well as the full possibility of a story ending abruptly or in any number of ways! The possibility of up to ten different endings is definitely an aspect that will allow for great replay value! With heightened graphics, sound, control, and storyline as the main areas of concentration, it is apparent that ASCII Entertainment had the player foremost in mind when developing this game.





RUN FOR YOUR LIFE!

In a game where one false move could easily mean the difference between escape and grizzly death, control is of paramount importance. This is another area where Clock Tower excels!

The ease with which the player can move about the screens and interact with objects (in a myriad of different ways) is easily accomplished with the use of surprising few different types of on-screen indicators. Each tells the character what types of actions are possible. This gives an intuitive control that is necessary when your life hangs on a split second decision. Additionally, using the item menu for accessing the items which you've collected is only a button press away!

From fleeing down dark corridors and hiding in shower stalls, to hurling chairs and brawling with your would be assailant, the full range of movements offered by Clock Tower will leave you breath-

less with the fight or flight instinct as you navigate the beautifully wrought 3D environment.

Very seldom does a game come out that achieves true excellence in every area of gameplay. With stunning visual effects, outstanding depth of characters and story line, precision control, perfection of the "Terror of Sound," as well as the replay value of ten endings, ASCII Entertainment must be congratulated for a work of art. Clock Tower is a masterpiece of Horror!

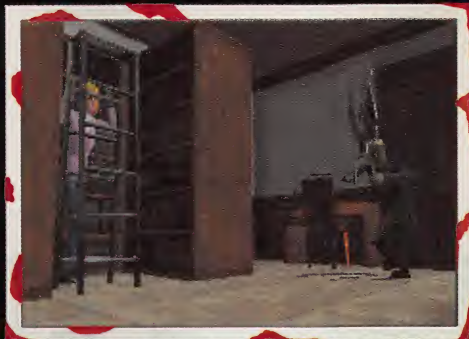
SPECIAL FEATURES!

In addition to the normal features of present day video games, like being able to save and load games, ASCII Entertainment has also included several "Special Features." As you will quickly notice when playing the game, you'll have the opportunity to play as four different characters. You can end the game with all four characters, and each one has several different endings depending on how well you do in the game. Once you've seen an ending, you can check on the special menu "Ending List" to see whether you got an A, B, C, D, or E ending. You can review the ending cinematic by selecting one of the endings you have completed (There is no cinematic for the D endings). In this way, you'll know when you've completed all ten endings. — Once you've completed an "A" ending, you can go to the "???" in the pamphlet menu option for a secret EXTRA MODE menu! Also, when you've completed all ten endings, you have the power to go back and start the game over — There will be another new option called BUYOBUBYO. (I won't give away what this does, but believe me, it's cool!)



TIPS ON STAYING ALIVE...

As you may have noticed, you can't actually expect to solve the case of the Scissorman if you're kicking up daisies with a large scissor hole in your chest. If you find this alarming, you may find that the following information may help you to get in a few good licks before spilling your guts at Scissorman's feet. Try to cope out a room before you're in danger. If there seems to be a large something that you could run around (like a table or a couch), it could buy you

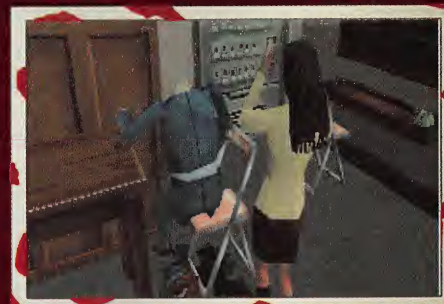
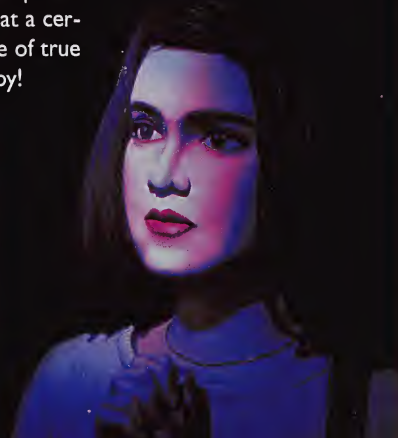
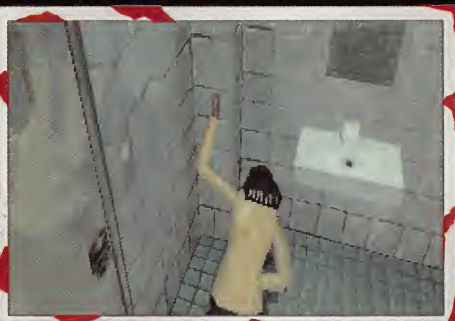


some time to think when Scissorman chase's you around and around. Also, look for items that you could possibly throw at Scissorman. There is one room with a chair that you can throw at him, in another room, there's a bike, and in yet another room, you can find a mop to hurl at your attacker. There are several items in each scenario that can be used to slow down the Scissorman, but be cautious with the items you throw, you can only throw them at him once. Also, try to avoid hiding in the same place too many times in a row. Scissorman has a limited IQ, but he's not that stupid! As a last resort, you can use the panic button to engage Scissorman in hand to hand combat. If you press the panic button fast enough, you live, if not, you're history! Be aware that you can only use this method a couple of times before your status arrow goes red — then you'll have to try running away instead of fighting...at least until your status goes back to yellow or white. Also remember to check every nook and cranny for items that you may be able to use later. With a little help, you might just live to see tomorrow.



DEATH OF A TIRED GENRE

With one of the first true horror stories to come to the PlayStation™ game console, ASCII Entertainment is staying at the forefront of ground breaking technology and new genre ideas with this latest game. This isn't just another of the tired "battle against the typical bad guy," formula game where you go into a scary house, look around, kick butt, and leave. Clock Tower brings a totally new villain concept to the screen. Scissorman appears in a mystical and beautiful land seldom thought of when conceiving a new game (Romsdaaren, Norway), and when he gets there, all hell breaks loose — it's your job to clean it all up and try to put a stop to it. The beauty is that the random appearance of the villain makes the game totally unpredictable from start to finish, giving a tired old preconception of games (that a character should be at a certain place at a certain time) a new life in what's sure to be a new genre of true horror games for the PlayStation game console. Enjoy!



RESIDENT EVIL

THE DIRECTOR'S CUT

ALSO
INCLUDES
RESIDENT EVIL
2 DEMO!!

In late '96, Capcom announced a new version of **Bio Hazard**, the Japanese version of **Resident Evil**, to be called **Bio Hazard' (Dash.) BH'** would take place in the same mansion as the first, but it would be an entirely new quest: all-new items, monsters, and angles. Sadly, development on the project was never completed... but I'm guessing that **Resident Evil: Director's Cut** is the end result of the work that went into **BH'**. The **Director's Cut** is essentially the same old **Resident Evil**, but several scenes are rendered from new angles, item placement is completely different, there are new costumes for Jill, Chris and Rebecca... and quite a few other surprises for veteran **Resident Evil** fans. Personally, I'd buy this game in a heartbeat, but I'm a manic **Resident Evil** devotee. It remains to be seen if the public feels the same; perhaps the playable demo of **Resident Evil 2** that comes packed in with **Director's Cut** will help convince them.

The first difference you'll notice in **Director's Cut** is the title screen. You can now select from three modes: Original, Beginner and Arrange. Original is the game we know and love, complete with old costumes and camera angles. Beginner is the old game, but with unlimited ammo, plenty of healing items, and easy monsters... Arrange, however, is what you pay for. You get more monsters, less ammo, about 30-40% of the scenes rendered with all-new angles and many different events, including tons of new scare-the-crap-out-of-you enemy appearances like the dog window-break in the original. Also, watch out for a shocking new enemy (Don't worry, I didn't reveal it in this layout... it's got to be the coolest thing in RE:DC! You have no idea...).

There's really not much more to say about the **Director's Cut**... If you really, really loved

Resident Evil and played it through with Chris and Jill to get each ending, then played it again with the special key and again with the rocket launcher and... well, you get the idea. If you're that type of maniac, then this game is definitely for you.

If you were a casual **ResEv** player, than the only saving

JILL VALENTINE
THE MASTER OF UNLOCKING

RECOGNIZE THE NEW, SHALL WE SAY, ENHANCED JILL!!

P
PREVIEW



PlayStation

DEVELOPER - CAPCOM

PUBLISHER - CAPCOM

FORMAT - 2 CDS

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - VARIABLE

AVAILABLE - SEPTEMBER



SHIN ROX

THINK YOU KNOW WHERE EVERY ITEM IS?
THINK YOU'VE SEEN IT ALL?
THINK AGAIN!

... grace is the RE2 demo. It's hard to level criticism on an improved version of an already nearly-perfect game, but I don't feel the name **Director's Cut** is deserved. Director's cuts of films usually feature scenes and elements completed but not included in the final release. **Resident Evil** had a wealth of hardcore items, such as an oilcan and pickaxe, as well as an entire sub-story (In the nearly-done-but-not-quite version of the original, you picked up a series of letters dating from the '60s entitled "Trevor's Letters" which gave explanations of why the mansion contained so many traps and hidden compartments, etc. As you found more letters, you followed Trevor on a harrowing tale to his death. The headstone that leads to the basement when you return to the mansion was Trevor's grave) removed from the final that could have been replaced. Oh well... Consider this to be the review of the **Director's Cut**, but keep watching GF for a **Resident Evil 2** preview based on the demo disc that will come with this title. Unfortunately, we didn't get it for this issue.

SR

CHRIS REDFIELD
ALPHA TEAM LEADER

YOU'D BETTER GIVE PROPS TO THE NEW COSTUMES!!



A new and highly original racing genre is about to be created (courtesy of Universal Interactive Studios and BlueShift software) in the form of a strange new game called *Running Wild*. Previously known as *Freakin' Fast* (now changed due to legal wranglings), both the names sum up the game perfectly; the graphics engine canters along at 60fps with amazing 3D texture-mapped detail; you're on foot and you pick your contestant from a group of deformed cartoon animals. This bizarre scenario is so strange, you'll swear it came from Japan. But no, this is home-grown talent at work here (the team responsible consists of ex-Atari programmers—some of whom created the seminal *Paperboy* back in the days of nonce and yore), ready and able to furnish PlayStation owners with a game that shoves many disparate genres together and conjures up a great looking concoction. We took a 40 percent complete version of the game out for a jog...

Before we actually trotted into action, we took a good look at the characters. These freakish weirdos are very strange bipedal versions of those you'd encounter on safari; a leather-jacketed punk zebra with a mohawk to match, a wild female cat in full jogging apparel and a thunderous bodybuilding elephant with a truly evil smile. These folk look exactly like extras straight out of *Crash Bandicoot* (the sequel is another of Universal Interactive Studios' releases) and the way the characters animate are all extremely similar (and hey, that's a good thing!). Once you've chosen your player (who have attributes that match their animal type), you're deposited on a jungle race track, and the object of the game is to (quite obviously) beat the other runners present. No leaping into vehicles for a rae — just a dash for the finish... on foot!

This is where the game gets an even more like *Crash*-like feel (specifically the running sections where the bandicoot is chased by the rolling rock), although the gameplay remains decidedly race-orientated. Run forward, leap for various routes throughout the three lap race, tread on green arrows for increased speed, avoid natural obstacles (such as water, rocks and spiky protrusions) and grab power-ups for special techniques. Kind of like *WipeOut XL*, but with mutant beasts instead of sleds. Also present is a leaping spring; enabling skilled players to vault onto their enemies (thus squashing them), and also to jump to secret areas and higher ground (where simply oodles of secret power-ups lie). The actual secret power-ups are increased speed, flight (enabling ground obstructions such as trees and spikes to be avoided) and an ice storm (making it very slippery for your foes!).

Once the jungle track (of the six available in the final version) had been negotiated, we moved on to the arctic track where pretty much the same antics continued, but this time with a severe lack of traction on our animals' boots. We then plugged in a second joypad, and wrestled each other in a two-player competition.

There's three different views of this mode currently available, and although the frame-rate drops to 30fps, the action remains just as intense; in a large cartoon running animal sort of way. Add a special ghost mode (save your best lap and an ethereal elephant shows this off when you return) and some special 'bosses' (beat these undisclosed critters to play as them), and you're looking at a cool new angle on the racing genre. We'll keep you posted on this *Animalympics* of the silicon world as it continues to progress... CH

3 DIFFERENT 2-PLAYER MODES!



RUNNING WILD



DEVELOPER - BLUE SHIFT
PUBLISHER - UNIVERSAL
FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2
DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE
AVAILABLE - FALL

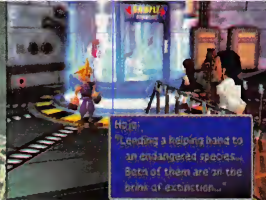
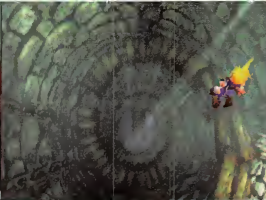
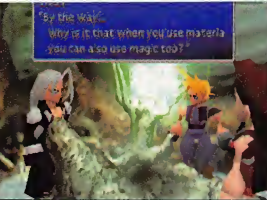
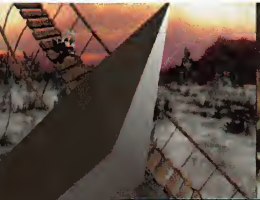
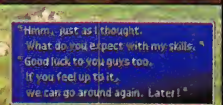


CHIEF HAMBLETON
Dang it! Eat yer heart out, Lola Bunny!



FINAL FANTASY VII™





It's here! Well, almost. We're very proud to bring you GameFan's first preview of the American version of *Final Fantasy VII*. This preview only represents the first fifth of the game. For the real expose, check back next month, when I'll review *FFVII*. For now, I'll tell you about how Square has created not only the greatest game of all time but also given it the best translation ever seen—not one iota less than it deserved.

For starters, Square hasn't changed a single name in the game. None. While this has happened in the past, it's never



happened in a *Final Fantasy*. The main reason was probably the fact that the games were only designed to display a certain number of characters per name—in this case, six. Because Square loves you greatly, they've actually reprogrammed the game to display nine characters per name in the American version... no small feat! I'm sure the entire memory card compression system had to be totally re-done to fit in those three extra letters per name... but that's just how much Square cares. They didn't want American players relating to characters like "Sefiro," "Vince," and "CaitSi," oh no. They wanted us to have Sephiroth, Vincent and Cait Sith in our party, like the original creators intended. The rest of the translation was handled with just as much respect, with the writers succeeding in retaining the unique personalities of the original characters (You see, written Japanese can express much more about a character's personality by the way he/she

talks than English.) For instance, Barret talks in full

FINAL FA

SQUARE ARE hardcore TRANSLATORS! NOT ONE NAME OR STORYLINE ASPECT HAS BEEN ALTERED!



...the been chosen as the leader of this Planet?"

"By the way... Why is it that when you use materia you can also use magic too?"

Hajoi: "Lending a helping hand to an endangered species. Both of them are on the brink of extinction..."

Barret: "Shut yer hole..."

"Hm... just as I thought. What do you expect with my skills. Good luck to you guys too. If you feel up to it, we can go around again. Later!"

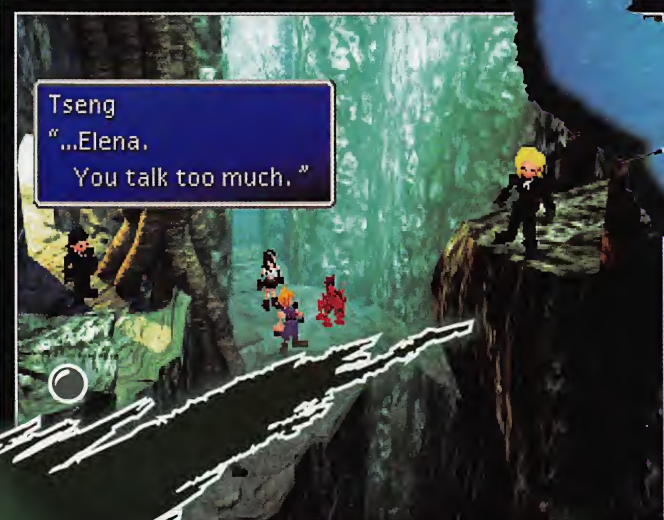
"Hey! Is that a 'Member's Card' I see shining in your hot little hand?"

President: "Now then, if you'll excuse me."

Aerith: "...I'll rip them off."



SQUARE HAS ADDED
ALL-NEW,
U.S.-ONLY FEATURES!
LOOK FOR THEM IN
NEXT MONTH'S REVIEW!



Tseng
"...Elena.
You talk too much."

Ebonics,
complete
with
phrases
like "If I
was alone
this wouldn't be no thang,
but I gots my reputation to
protect," and "Shu'up foo!
Don't forget yo' skinny ass is workin' for
Avalanche now!" etc. It adds a nice touch, and is
totally different from the usual "everyone talks the
same" translations most US RPGs get. As another
astounding bonus, Square is actually improving the
American version of FFXVII by apparently adding
two all-new bosses as well as systems to
better manage your materia, the
baubles you equip to use magic
and other abilities (for the
breakdown of this and
other FFXVII systems,

FANTASY VII



read Takuhi's report on the Japanese version in the
April issue, or wait until next month for
Rox's). Hmm. There's no more room.
Ah well, this spread was mainly for
the screenshots, anyway. See
you next month! **NR**

PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - SQUARE

PUBLISHER - SONY

FORMAT - 3 CDs

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - SEPT. 7TH



Sephiroth
"Out of my way.
I'm going to see my girl."



Barret
"Rufus!
Shit! I forgot about..."

All art ©1997 Square.
Art on preceding page
by Tetsuya Nomura.



NICK ROX



"The Air Forces' Gelnik?"



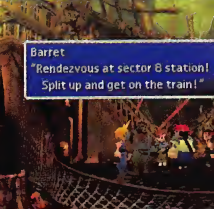
"You want drink?
Iz ok. You take time."




Priscilla
"Be careful Mr. Dolphin!"



Yuffie
"Eeeew! What IS it! GROSS!"



Barret
"Rendezvous at sector 8 station!
Split up and get on the train!"

A tank is shown driving across a vast, undulating desert landscape of orange sand dunes under a dark blue sky. The tank is positioned in the middle ground, moving towards the right. A thin line connects the tank to the text above it.

*99 bullet-riddled bodies on the wall,
99 bullet-riddled bodies,
take one down, pass it around,
98 bullet-riddled bodies on the wall.
98 bullet-riddled bodies...*

Ah, the smell of napalm. The thrill of tearing across 10 different treacherous 3D battlegrounds. The exhilaration of climbing over boulders and enemy targets. Not to mention the beautiful sound of your arsenal blowing away tanks and downing helicopters in head-to-head combat.

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STEEL REIGN



ripping through streams. The joyous feeling of riding and guiding your missiles straight into You better fasten your military-issue seat belts, you're in for the adrenaline rush of your life.

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APOCALYPSE



Here we are with an update of Activision's *Apocalypse*, one of the first console games to prominently feature an A-list actor. In this case, the one and only Bruce Willis is testing the interactive waters.

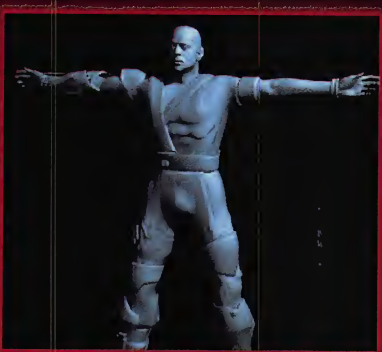
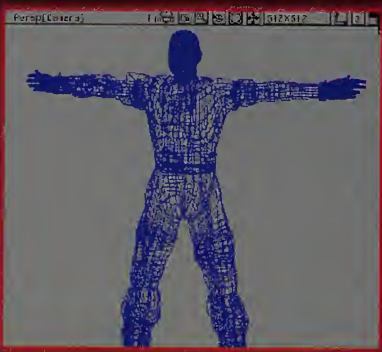
Since we previewed this game last month, a couple of new levels have been added- the cemetery, where you and Bruce are running through a misty graveyard as beasties jump out from behind head stones, and an early version of the war factory level which has you running along grates above molten metal and jumping through rotating half cogs and big smashers. Apart from that, this is pretty much the same game we looked at last issue.

There's still very little gameplay implemented in this very early version, though there is enough to get a sense of what Activision is shooting for. Bruce will work as your virtual partner, sometimes telling you what to do, covering you, or even making snide comments about your performance. At this point however, very little of Bruce's actual recorded dialogue is in, though you do get to hear him say a few things like, "Hope you're not afraid of the dark," and yell "Jump!" as you make your way between buildings in the rooftop level.

This game is still a few months from completion, and Activision certainly has their work cut out for them if the game is to live up to the hype surrounding Bruce's involvement. They're heading in the right direction with the control system and storyline, they just have a few camera and game speed issues to iron out, which I'm sure they will.

There's a lot riding on this game, and if it all pans out, perhaps we'll see more big name actors take the gaming plunge. Only time will tell.

SD



Bruce Willis' ultimate adventure in the digital world!



U
UPDATE



DEVELOPER - ACTIVISION

OF PLAYERS - 1

PUBLISHER - ACTIVISION

DIFFICULTY - UNKNOWN

FORMAT - CD

AVAILABLE - FALL '97



SUBSTANCE D

Welcome to paradise, kid!

DEATHTRAP DUNGEON

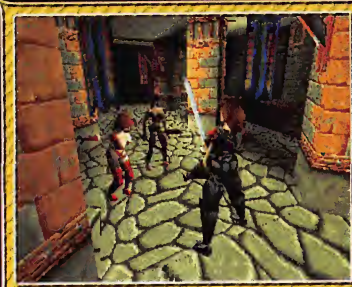


Time for a confession: I played *D&D* in high school. Big-time. Except it wasn't *D&D* specifically, it was *Advanced Fighting Fantasy*, the sit-down role-playing version of the popular *Fighting Fantasy* novel series. And now, a *Fighting Fantasy* video game is finally being made, and it's being produced under the careful guidance of *FF* co-founder Ian Livingstone. The game: *Deathtrap Dungeon*, number 6 in the *Fighting Fantasy* novel series. The makers: Eidos Interactive, producers of *Tomb Raider* and *Fighting Force*. And it's coming to your PlayStation this fall.

Thus far, things are looking quite early. The frame rate needs help, but as you can see, the environments are very detailed. A small portion of the first of ten levels is fully playable, with around a half-a-dozen active (and brutal!) enemies to fight. I'll take you through the initial level: First, I tug on a door (easy, back and X), which opens into a huge room. I see excellent, atmospheric lighting effects everywhere, barrels, torches, and perfect wood/stonework architecture.

Mmn...just like I imagined it would be, cool. I make short work of four bothersome thieves, with a handy sword and multiple slashing variations, and pick up a key hidden in the shadows. So, I discover, 'tis a third-person perspective action engine, with a healthy dose of treasure hunting. I enter the next set of corridors, only to be assaulted by a massive polygonal rock golem. Fleeing like a coward (this guy's BIG), I hear his pounding footsteps rattling the tunnels in hot pursuit. Great atmosphere. Now, I have to tell you, I've always wanted to get into a scuffle with a rock golem, so this chase is thrilling. I turn back just in time to see a great boulder rolling my way—oops, forgot they could do that—and crunch, I'm a puddle of meat, seeping through the cracks of *Deathtrap Dungeon*. If there's more of this to come I can't wait!

Well, I went back and found a few new rooms, but unfortunately very little collision have been put into place, so possible items (weapons, keys, etc.) tucked away in chests and pottery weren't accessible. The PC mock-up shots look awesome, with stunning polygonal renders of some of the 55 different creatures populating the countless incredibly detailed catacombs. One can only hope the PS version eventually looks this good, but I'm confident Ian Livingstone's designs will ensure an excellent quest regardless. *Deathtrap Dungeon* will certainly return to these pages, but in the meantime I'll be happily digging through my *FF* collection. **G**



P
PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - EIDOS

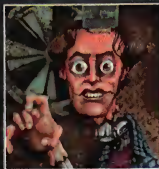
OF PLAYERS - 1

PUBLISHER - EIDOS

DIFFICULTY - UNKNOWN

FORMAT - CD

AVAILABLE - FALL



GLITCH
The power of the Boulderbeast cannot be stopped!



ODD WORLD

ABE'S ODDYSEE

Start looking forward to this one. **Abe's Oddworld Oddyssey** from supremely talented game newcomers **Oddworld Inhabitants** is easily the nicest looking platform/puzzle/adventure (think **Out of This World** or **Flashback**) I've ever seen. Not only that, but the story and setting are highly unique, very trippy, and just plain odd.

As the story opens in gorgeous CG FMV, we are introduced to **Abe**, a lowly worker in a **Rupture Farms** meat processing plant. While cleaning, **Abe** stumbles upon a secret plan that details the use of him and his fellow workers as an ingredient in a new line of **Tasty Gristle Treats**. Filled with horror, he sets out on his adventure to bring down **Rupture Farms** and save himself and his meat mates from becoming someone's snack food.

This is a superb-looking game and features one of the most cohesive environments

I've yet encountered. The animation is of the highest quality and the **FF7**

style "FMV into gameplay" is just as impressively implemented here.

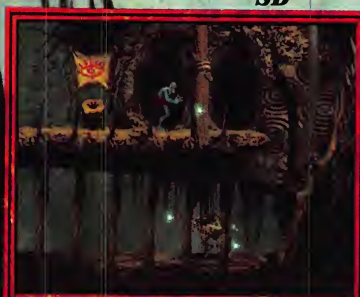
But all the graphic prowess in the world is no substitute for fun and original gameplay and thankfully **Abe's** delivers here as well.

Perhaps the biggest innovation here is called **GameSpeak**. It allows you to speak to some inhabitants using simple phrases like hello, wait, and follow me. You can also chant, whistle a couple of different ways, laugh and even fart.

The gameplay you experience is very cool. You'll be doing things like opening portals and taking control of enemies through chanting, mimicking the whistles and um, bottom burps of other inhabitants, deactivating bombs, sneaking through shadows, and riding a wonderfully designed creature called an **Ehum**.

There is so much more to show of this game but we're saving that for the review and also waiting for a complete version (ours was a little buggy). Even now, it's more than obvious that this is an ambitious title with the utmost care being taken in its design. Look for the full GF treatment before the game's September release.

SD



U
UPDATE



DEVELOPER - ODDWORLD INHAB.

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

PUBLISHER - GT INTERACTIVE

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

FORMAT - CD

AVAILABLE - SEPTEMBER '97



SUBSTANCE D
It's people!
It's people!

Evil Never Sleeps. And Now Neither Will You.



Ogre Battle™

Limited Edition

Available Exclusively
For The PlayStation™
Game Console

An enhanced version of the popular 16 bit title - now impossible to find! *Ogre Battle: The March of the Black Queen* features improved graphics, additional musical scores, and we have even redone the spells to look even better than the original version!

Command your army through the Zenobian Empire and reclaim the continent! Along the way, recruit additional characters to join your quest. Once in control, will you hand over power to the rightful ruler or keep the continent for yourself?

Only you can decide!

A proven hit! The name says it all!



UNIQUE FEATURES

- COMMAND 75 DIFFERENT TYPES OF CHARACTERS!
- 13 POSSIBLE ENDINGS ENHANCE REPLAY VALUE.
- NON-LINEAR GAMEPLAY.
- HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE EITHER GOOD, NEUTRAL OR EVIL!
- THIS LIMITED EDITION TAKES OGRE BATTLE TO A WHOLE NEW LEVEL OF 32 BIT GAMEPLAY!

"One of the All-time great Strategy/RPG's"
(PSExtreme)

"...Ogre Battle has Solid Seller emblazoned on it."
(Video Game Advisor—April, 1997)

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TREASURES OF THE DEEP



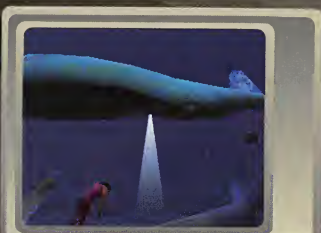
**DEDICATED TO THE
MEMORY OF
JACQUES COUSTEAU**
OCEANIC EXPLORER AND
INVENTOR OF THE AQUALUNG
1910-1997

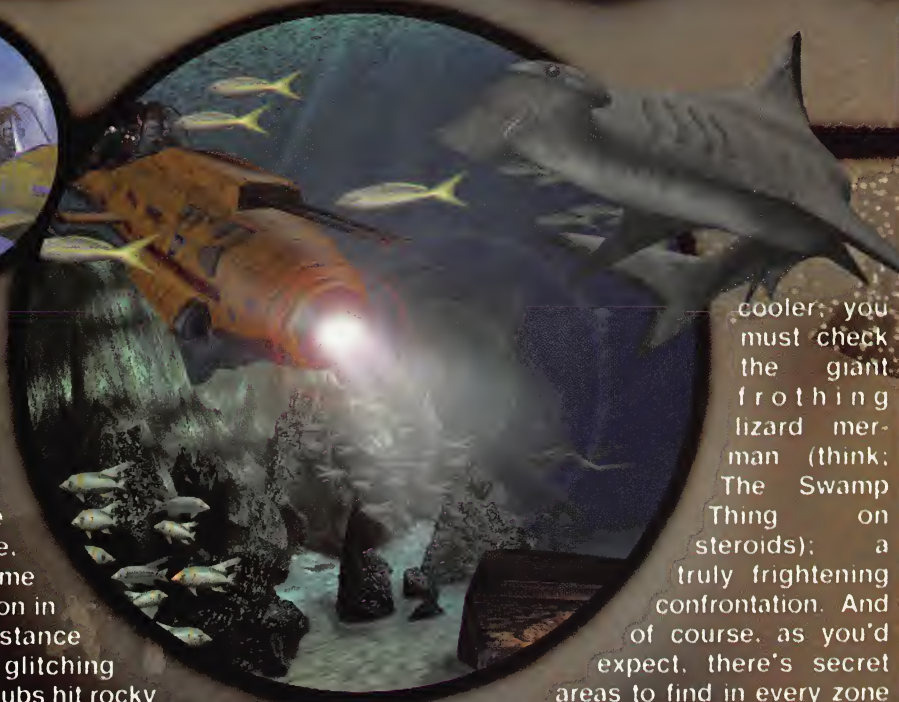
Ever since ArtDink paved the way for underwater exploration ventures with the marvelous (yet slightly trippy) *The Aquanaut's Holiday*, video gamers across the continent have been waiting (with bated breath) for another exploration into the deep. Just as we know little about the vast ocean floors of our own planet, so our game designing brethren have neglected to bear us quests into the deep blue yonder. Despite the relaxing nature of *The Aquanaut's Holiday*, there was very little actual interaction in the title (which dismayed many action-orientated gamers), and indeed, no one has successfully constructed a fully 'submerging' ocean experience. That is, until Black Ops stepped into view with the truly brilliant and inspiring *Treasures of the Deep*.

The ingeniousness of this title is apparent from the very first time you don your rubber wetsuit and plunge into the inky blackness. You are the tough no-nonsense grizzled hero for hire known as Jack Runyan, ex-navy SEAL and double-plunderer. Your quest for riches takes you to turbulent waters throughout the world, from the dark waters and seething undercurrents of the Mariana Trench to the shark infested waters of the Great Barrier Reef. However, unlike *The Aquanaut's Holiday*, you're not rely-

ing on sonar to spin fish around in circles. Oh no. This underwater experience utilizes the latest in high-tech submarine warfare; with gameplay straight out of the underwater sequences of a James Bond movie.

After taking time to adjust to the slightly stiff control system and choose my correct view (from a choice of two), I plunged straight into the watery depths. You'll be flapping along behind your submersible, desperately trying to 'fathom' (ahem) where your mission objective lies are. It could be obtaining an ancient artifact for a museum, or facing an evil madman in his lair. Whatever the case, you'll be winding through subterranean trenches, swimming past large and dangerous denizens of the deep and desperately looking for more health and an air supply. You're essentially moving through the ocean floor, dodging sharks, scooting through schools of brightly colored fish, grabbing nuggets of gold, netting certain types of aquatic life (some enable you to obtain money, others shouldn't be caught) and heading for your next mission objective (an enemy sub to down or a greater menace to face). You'll also face those sinister black divers seen in every spy movie featuring watery action: stab at their snorkel or bag them for more cash. The entire graphical engine paints a convinc-





ing picture of life underwater. from the wafting aquatic life to the undulating surface waves. True, there's some pop-up going on in the murky distance (and some glitching when certain subs hit rocky outcrops), but the experience is still marvelous to behold, a suspension of disbelief further heightened by the initially ambient soundscapes warbling away in the background (strangely reminiscent of William Orbit in parts).

Once you've completed your first mission and examined your first 'treasure of the deep', you can visit the aquanaut's shop prior to your next mission. Stock up on torpedoes, mines, seeker mines, nets and any from eight different submarines (different missions call on different equipment as you'd expect). There's also different wetsuits to buy - one for example protects you from lava eruptions - vital for some of the later levels. And these later levels are definitely the most fun. Sure, every level is well designed and thought out, but those featuring huge monster bosses are even

cooler; you must check the giant frothing lizard merman (think: The Swamp Thing on steroids): a truly frightening confrontation. And of course, as you'd expect, there's secret areas to find in every zone (break a piece of rock to find a secret passage leading to a large gold deposit), as well as a Greek tablet to locate on each of the 12 level, and these give you the greatest treasure of all...

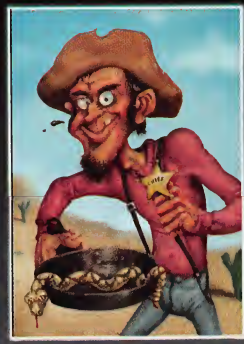
A truly different and enthralling release, *Treasures of the Deep* is recommended thoroughly despite the ease of completion (professional gamers should have this licked in a day or so), especially as each level can be completed on your first try. However, looking for secrets and finding all the treasures contained on the ocean floor will have you occupied for much longer; and the fact that each previous level can be entered again and again further heightens this game's replay value. Novel, beautiful to behold and a delight to play, *Treasures* is a worthy catch for any PlayStation owner.

CH

R REVIEW



- DEVELOPER - BLACK OPS
- PUBLISHER - NAMCO
- FORMAT - CD
- # OF PLAYERS - 1
- DIFFICULTY - EASY
- AVAILABLE - SEPTEMBER



CHIEF HAMBLETON
An 'in-depth' gift from Black Ops!

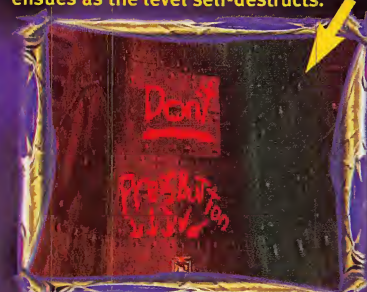
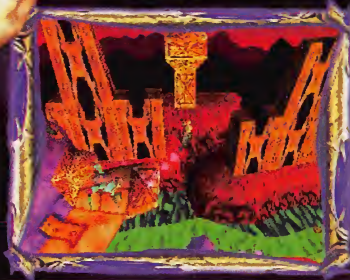


PANDEMONIUM 2™

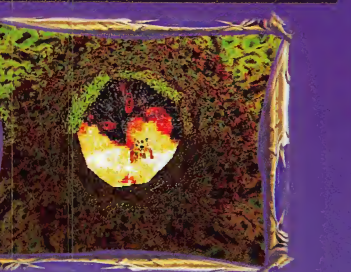
Since E.Storm's big preview last month, a few new levels and game-play elements have been added to Crystal Dynamics' *Pandemonium 2*. The game is still quite early in development, but we've laid out all the new shots with a short description of what the developers have in mind as far as gameplay and level structure goes. Remember that much of what you see here might change as the game continues to progress.



This giant room is a fine example of the kind of puzzle-type play-mechanics you'll see in *Pandemonium 2*. You begin by climbing into the rotating chamber in the center of the room. Each time it rotates, you'll gain access to one of four catwalks stretching out to the walls. The level reaches a dramatic climax once you've reached the final switch, marked by the words "Press Button!" Yank it and the camera swings upwards to reveal "Don't" (doh!). An explosive escape ensues as the level self-destructs.



Here we have the latest and greatest level in *Pandemonium 2*, the Mech chase. The developers felt that their fully 3D rendered mech boss was just too pretty to blow-up and leave for scrap. So what do they do? Make a whole new first-person shooter level, designed specifically for the mech to barrel down at break-neck speeds. Producers on the project claim that the *Pandemonium 2* engine is so flexible that with simple modifications the designers can offer these types of environments and more. I can't wait to see what else they're planning!



To accompany the new high-tech look, the music is being scored with harder, techno overtones (instead of the happy platformer tunes of the first). In fact, after playing this latest rev at the E3, I'm convinced of *Pandemonium 2*'s darker atmosphere. The Crystal people were delighted to show me the new fire power-up that Fargus has—laughing in delight as he ran around on fire screaming in pain! Yeah! There's nothing like cool people making cool games. We're out of details for now, but stick with GF for much more *Pandemonium 2*. G



UPDATE



PlayStation

DEVELOPER - CRYSTAL DYNAMICS

PUBLISHER - CRYSTAL DYNAMICS

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - UNKNOWN

AVAILABLE - OCTOBER



GLITCH

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1 HIDDEN DESERT BASE

NEUTRALIZE THE MILITIA ENCAMPMENT AND DESTROY THE RADAR INSTALLATION.



2 OCCUPIED CITY

DESTROY ENEMY OCCUPIED BUILDINGS. PLUNDER AND DESTROY THE MUNITIONS DEPOT.



Up until now, when it came to tank simulations (in all their over complexity and retentiveness) you could pretty much count me out. With inherent problems too numerous to list, this is one category sorely in need of some help.

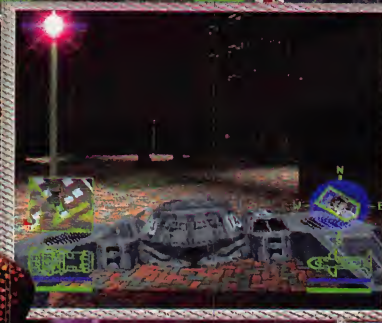
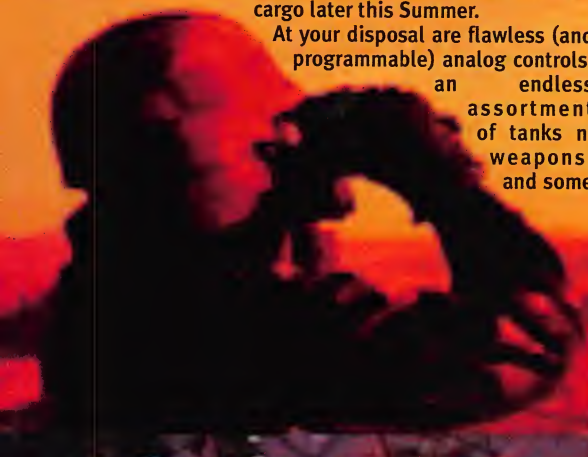
As luck would have it, help is on the way in the shape of *Steel Reign*, a kick ass game-o-war that'll bring out the animal in any hard core gamer with a thirst for destruction.

While only a handful of missions were buttoned up for preview purposes I can pretty much guarantee that *Steel Reign* will deliver the cargo later this Summer.

At your disposal are flawless (and programmable) analog controls, an endless assortment of tanks n' weapons, and some

3 WASTELAND

ELIMINATE ALL OIL RIGS
DESTROY THE FUEL REFINERY AND DISRUPT ENEMY OPERATIONS



STEEL REIGN



P
PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - SONY

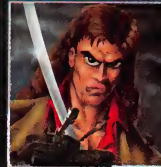
OF PLAYERS - 1-2 (SPLIT)

PUBLISHER - SONY

DIFFICULTY - NA

FORMAT - CD

AVAILABLE - SEPTEMBER



E. Storm
Hey, watch where yer pointin' that thing!

ALBER ODYSSEY

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MAD BOSS ATTACKS!

Fear the power of *ONE*'s mad bosses! This big S.O.B., a gorgeous

polygonal model, follows Cain's every move. He'll laser-strafe white-hot beams through the windows and launch missiles into the walkway, causing giant explosions and fiery showers of shrapnel! Spectacular!



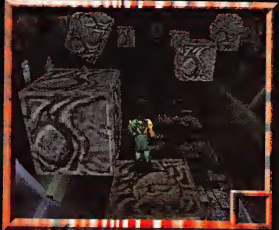
won't be easy.

Most importantly, the developers have added solid gameplay elements, such as enemy patterns, REALLY exciting, mad, mad gunfire played wildly about the screen, and ultra-refined level design (the city level-Metropolis-looks HOT!). The game actually plays properly, *solidly* now, allowing a fully-playable gameplay experience and a tangible sensation of how the final product might appear...and it's looking very good, so good that even Mr. Miyamoto was rumored to have been genuinely interested in checking out the product on the show floor at E3. *ONE* has just become a major force on the PS fall schedule, keeping company with the likes of *Crash 2*, *Gex*, and *FF7*. I can't wait to see more. **G**

It's time to check back with John Cain, the hero of ASC's promising fall action title, *ONE*. Developers Visual Concepts have polished many levels, cleaned-up the controls, and tweaked the lighting effects. It was practically a brand new game at E3. Here's a quick run-down of the latest additions:

The cliff levels now occur at night, as opposed to the bright daytime setting our last version offered. A simple change in the lighting and backgrounds, and *voila*, a dramatic night-time action-fest replaces the boring blue hues of daytime battle. It's actually a great choice on the part of V.C. and ASC; the lighting is prolific and powerful, the characters stand-out dramatically amid the colorful gun-play, and the sense of urgency during your infiltration mission seems far less subdued. Just check out the fantastic bridge shot (with rows of shining light-posts) for an idea of the atmospheric changes--and remember that the engine is pushing loads of effects and polygons at 30 to 60 fps without failure.

Mmm, what else? One new level has Cain travelling down a giant pipe, into a fiercely tough platforming area. Speeding past strips of disappearing footholds, timing jumps perfectly (watch that shadow!), and finally facing a squadron of rotating blocks, which must be ducked and jumped *quickly*, it appears as though Johnny's quest



**U
UPDATE**



DEVELOPER - VISUAL CONCEPTS
PUBLISHER - ASC
FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1
DIFFICULTY - UNKNOWN
AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER



GLITCH
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PLAY AS YOUR FAVORITE BAT HERO!

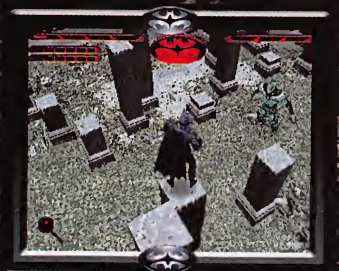
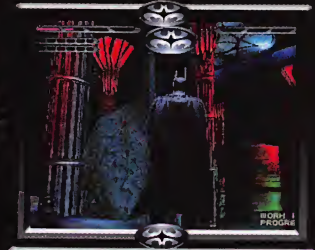
Those readers familiar with the terms 'movie license' and 'Batman in a video game' will instantly understand the trepidation I had when I investigated this new title. Previous forays into the silicon adventures of the caped crusader (ranging from the cool but extremely flawed *Batman Returns* to the downright hideous *Batman Forever*) had left me numb, and with good reason; a mediocre side-scrolling beat-'em-up starring bat-folk (punch, kick, special move, and the same enemies over and over again) drove me into a rage only surpassed by a bout on *Battle Monsters*.

Fortunately however, Probe Entertainment have wisely dispensed with such a dated and tedious genre. Instead, they've looked at what made their own and other video games so much fun, and are currently bundling the best ideas into one potentially awesome video game. Firstly, you've got a whole of Gotham City to play with. This 'go-anywhere' within ten square kilometers (the metropolis constantly streams from CD) makes for a most entertaining ride; now you're really in control of your destiny, with only clues to decipher along the way. What's cool is there's no 'wrong' way to go and no 'levels' to trek through; a total lack of the tiresome 'linear' gaming that's so refreshing, especially after the monotonous trot of previous Batman games.

The graphics are amongst the finest seen on the PlayStation. Aside from the sleek polygonal Batmobile in the outside areas (which play essentially like a souped-up and ominous version of the third *Die Hard*), there's the *Tomb Raider* adventuring of the interiors. From the dank sewer walls

and detailed museum stone to the flapping cape and Clooney's texture-mapped chin, everything looks incredibly real and detailed with perfect atmosphere captured from the film. The two different 'types' of game (driving and exploration) have been realized successfully before in video games, and melding the two together seamlessly is an act of genius. Add muscle directly from the film and the use of the features of the entire main cast (something sadly missing from *Die Hard Trilogy*) including the option to play as Batman, Robin or Batgirl and you're on your way to realizing the potential for a smash hit that Probe rightly deserve.

Batman and Robin will a sure-fire hit for a number of reasons. My favorite reason is that it features deep and novel gameplay, excellent AI and a great *Tomb Raider*-inspired world. However, it's also the game of a hit movie (no matter how bad the film turned out to be), and will have an insane marketing budget as the corporate muscle of Acclaim and Warner Brothers swing into action. *ID4* demonstrated how a truly terrible game could achieve huge sales simply by cashing in on a successful film (and, er, sweetening certain other magazines, but we won't go there). *Batman and Robin* will achieve similar success in exactly the same way, but this time, gamers won't be robbed blind when they switch their console on. You see, this could be one of the few movie-licensed video games that actually plays as well as a 'normal' Grade A release (in a 'just-as-exciting-as-Tomb-Raider' type way). My, what a novel concept... Stay tuned for further developments... at the (wait for it) same Bat time, same Bat channel. **CH**



BATMAN ROBIN

P
PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - PROBE

PUBLISHER - ACCLAIM

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - UNKNOWN

AVAILABLE - OCTOBER



CHIEF HAMBLETON
Holy competent programmers, Batman! A movie license that looks good!

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Formula 1 '97

Quite simply the best F1 game on the PlayStation (er, but that's not saying much), a follow-up to *Formula 1* is set to go in September, startlingly entitled *Formula 1 '97*. Hey, if *Madden* and *Fifa Soccer* can have yearly upgrades, then why not *F1*? After a 70 percent complete copy landed in my lap for perusal, I was somewhat taken aback at the similarity between the two releases. Could this be a blatant cash-in in a *Street Fighter*-tastic fashion, or are we talking some serious gameplay improvements here? I'm waiting for the final review. For the moment, let's check the added features that Psygnosis are using to justify another *Formula 1* game so comparable to the previous one.

Well, firstly there's a cockpit view. And before you scoot past this bit, it's not just for show; there's dials, LEDs and other gubbins all showing your car's performance throughout the race. The rest of the views however, are those you've seen before. Add to this some 'improved clipping' (not apparent in the version I played, but an accompanying press release states this, so I'll hope the horrible pop-up I witnessed will vanish), improved weather effects such as rain actually falling, extra lighting, and perhaps one of the biggest changes; real-time crashing and damage effects. This is what was really missing from the original; now when you tap the back wheel of an opponent, you'll both spin out of control, flip into the air with tires spinning in all directions and come crashing back to earth in a gout of flame. Plus, there's smoke! Suspension buckling! Oil spray! And more sparks on the underside of the car too! Whoopee! Finally, there's the now-regulatory lens-flare effects, and a special 'tunnel vision' feature (enter a tunnel and you're blinded for a second as your 'eyes' adjust to the darkness).

This time around, the arcade mode becomes more frantic and... well... arcade-like (powerslides come into their own here), whilst the simulation feature has all the tweaks and twiddling you'll ever need, from a three lap warm up to an 80 lap nightmare, where every corner could send you spinning out of the race. Of course, you'll be making those pitting strategies again, and so will the computer opponents; the AI has been developed to scary proportions. Opposing drivers now have their own individual styles, they make mistakes (watch with glee as Schumacher swerves into a chicane and spins into the hay bales!), the back markers allow the front drivers to pass them easily, and the choice of team also becomes vital. A final list of improvements scheduled for this follow-up includes debris remaining on a track after a crash ("watch for that oil, wheeeeeee!"), random AI for each race, cool



rendered scenes which become more impressive depending on your progress, a split-screen two-player mode, high resolution display, a new Austrian track and the massive amount of options that greeted players the first time around.

With all these enhancements, the car-racing fanatic should be more than satisfied with this fix. I'm more of an arcade driver myself, and the version I played was slightly too early to many any objective judgments on (the cars sometimes floated six feet above the track and there was that nasty pop-up which I'm assured will be fixed), but once we've sat down and experienced the many advancements made over the previous game, we'll be back to inform you whether this is a worthy successor to the F1 throne. **CH**



P PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - BIZARRE CREATIONS

PUBLISHER - PSYGNOSIS

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

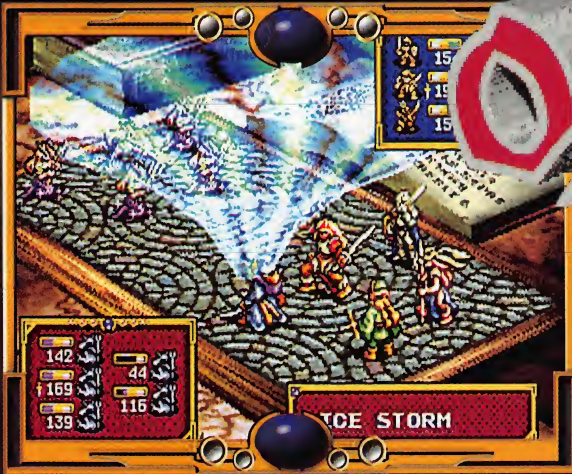
DIFFICULTY - HARD

AVAILABLE - FALL '97



CHIEF HAMBLETON
Repeating the formula for success?

Ogre Battle



More than ever, the adage "what was old is new again" could fairly well describe a large number of games being released these days. Whether an older game gets all gussied up like my fair lady or an older game is presented in its pure, unaltered, original form, successful ideas are seldom laid to rest (nor should they be for that matter). Now, Quest's SNES battle RPG, *Ogre Battle*, has found a new lease on life and a new home on Sony's 'do everything' PS. Apparently, *Ogre Battle* is quite rare on cartridge, so this should make a few mad people out there very happy.

The developers of this update, ArtDink, haven't completely redone the game. In fact, all they've really done is tweak it a bit here and there. For instance the battle screen, though the effect is subtle, is now polygonal and it scales. Look at the books in the background of the screen shots and you should be able to tell. Also, the spell effects cast by either your characters or the tarot cards are now resplendent with transparencies and some simple light sourcing. You gotta have light sourcing these days, you know. Everything else, like the character sprites and map screen remain identical to the 16bit original. And aside from the addition of a very useful mid battle save feature, the gameplay is untouched.

I never played the original *Ogre Battle*, so this was an all new experience for me. Taken for what it is, there's really nothing wrong with it. Keeping in mind its intention and heritage, the game looks and sounds alright (Liberation!), and there is a quite a lot to keep track of and do to be successful in battle. There are certainly more elaborate, more recent examples of the genre to be sure, but those who were never able to track down the original *OB* (isn't that a feminine product?) should be excited by this slightly prettier update.

SD



Evil Never Sleeps.

And Now Neither Will You.



DEVELOPER - ARTDINK
PUBLISHER - ATLUS
FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1
DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
AVAILABLE - NOW



SUBSTANCE D
What was old is new again.

Last month, I took you through all the features that make *Ace Combat 2* a true leap forward over its predecessor; the depth of view, convincing environment and the seat-of-your-pants action all combine to produce the sweetest looking flyer outside the realms of *Pilotwings 64*. As you'd expect, the front-end is luscious (from the photo-realistic CG introduction to the highly-polished intro and attract screens and information prior to take-off), and the Japanese developers must be congratulated for instantly transporting the player into the world of the top gun pilot so convincingly. The loss of the two player mode is actually a good move (the first game's multi-player wasn't so much a failure as a downright embarrassment to play), and the graphical polish is scrubbed all over this title with such a sheen that you wonder just how seminal the game would have been if the developers had had time to include a greater depth of play...

This month, after even more extensive sorties and intense arcade action, I can report back; to inform you that *Ace Combat 2* is a definite recommendation

ACE COMBAT 2™

IS THIS GAME A TOP GUN?

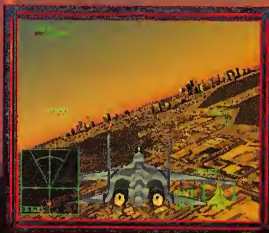
ACE PILOT HAMBLETON TOOK NAMCO'S LATEST EPIC FOR A SPIN!

for all arcade pilots. I must stress the word 'arcade' here because this game's definitely 'targeted' at trigger-happy bandits rather than the serious flight simulator fan. The game's 20 missions are all essentially the same (fly around, bag targets, go home), but this time around (and to relieve the scene of monotony so prevalent in the first *Ace Combat*), Namco has tried to spice the scenarios up. Now you've got missions where wayward missiles must be tailed as they weave about the sky (just like that bit in *Under Siege*, but without Steven Seagal's 'constipation look' in any of the cut-scenes), sorties where you must actually fly your million-dollar aircraft into a tunnel (pure *Star Wars* action!) and even landings on a naval battleship (overshoot the runway and there's some serious strip-page of medals).

However, despite all these extra versions of essentially the same missions (and those extra secrets), *Ace Combat 2* is still ever so slightly... monotonous. I found that by the sixteenth stage, maneuvering my somewhat sluggish plane (another minor gripe; the control is a little too slow) and targeting mis-

siles on an enemy plane, boat, or installation had become something of a chore. There's those deadly enemy pilots to gun down in air-to-air combat and everything plays like greased lightning with astounding graphics and sound and a real sensation of speed, but the premise of essentially repeating the same style of play made me grin and bear the entire experience rather than relish it.

Now don't get me wrong; *Ace Combat 2* is still the most intense flying experience ever to grace a console, and with a slight variation in gameplay (such as different weapons and a tighter turning circle for the aircraft), *Ace Combat 2* would have become an instant classic. As it is, I'd recommend you take to the skies in stages; I burnt out relatively quickly with the constantly similar gameplay. I'd have no hesitation in instantly grabbing a copy and playing it at a more leisurely pace... Just be prepared for more torpedo targeting than you can possible imagine... **CH**



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R
REVIEW



DEVELOPER - NAMCO

OF PLAYERS - 1

PUBLISHER - NAMCO

DIFFICULTY - EASY

FORMAT - CD

AVAILABLE - AUGUST



CHIEF HAMBLETON
Got a bogey on my tail. And one in my nose. Doh!



Perhaps the biggest shock for a racing nutcase like my good self was a relatively unknown *V-Rally* title hidden away in Ocean's stand. Quite why Sony didn't grab this game and parade it on the largest television their monstrous booth had to offer is even more surprising; especially as this not only looks to be the best-looking rally title on any system (and I'm including the Nintendo 64 there), but the driving game with the most massive collection of tracks ever seen. From a brief (yet intense) tear around some of the 42 (!!!) courses on offer, I came away screaming for another game (flailing to such an extent that I accidentally fell over the head of Ocean, but that's another story).



Lyon-based developers Infogrames (creators of the *Alone in the Dark* series) have been toiling ceaselessly for over three years on this project, and their huge endeavor has paid off with a racing experience right up there with the likes of *Rage Racer* and *Sega Rally*. However, this looks to be much more than that; take for example the courses. All 42 are different models based on real-life courses around Europe. So, the English tracks are overcast and misty, and the Corsican tracks feature sand and rocky outcrops. What's stunning is that they're all separate (no extra portions of the same track this time!), the 3D physics on the cars are excellent (save for some slight weightlessness) and the texture-maps stunningly detailed.



Supreme driving is promised, along with analog compatibility and a two player mode free from slowdown. There's some brief pop-up, but I'm prepared to forgive Infogrames for this slight glitching after I saw half a dozen official European rally cars (from this year's WRC season) texture-mapped to high heaven and a night time mode where the cars' headlights actually light up the scenery, not to mention variable weather conditions (dig that rain effect!) and sound effects mixed in Dolby Surround. From my brief runabout, I'm ready to be taken for the biggest ride of my life... Stay tuned for an exhaustive review next issue. I can't wait! **CH**



P
PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - INFOGRAMES

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

PUBLISHER - OCEAN

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

FORMAT - CD

AVAILABLE - FALL '97



CHIEF HAMBLETON
You want rally games? Better ask Ocean!



FELONY

WREAK HAVOC AS YOU RUN FROM THE LAW!!!



THE GARAGE OF JUSTICE!



Ramming cars off busy streets, tearing up the sidewalks in a Porsche while hordes of screaming pedestrians scatter, and inflicting innumerable amounts of damage to municipal property is wrong. Unless of course, you're a crazed lunatic with a deathwish who's just robbed an antiques store and is trying to scarp-er with some priceless heirloom. Wanton destruction of property on a mass scale has always added to the certain ambiance of some of the more memorable video game releases, so why not take it to the next level? This is what Japanese developers Climax have done with *Runabout*; the "break everything" rule has been taken to the absolute extreme. Now US gamers can look forward to a direct port-over in the form of an insanity-inducing excursion known as *Felony 11-79*; the bestial offspring of *Ridge Racer* and *Twisted Metal*. With absolutely no regard for public safety, I drove an increasing number of killer vehicles through three colossal cityscapes for a week of the most intense highway action ever seen. After large stretches of Chinatown, the Beach and a French city were destroyed, I hobbled back to the GameFan garage with my thoughts...

From the lowly Mini Cooper to the mighty Ferrari, there's every single car under the sun present on your tour around town. Engage warp speed with the frighteningly fast F1 race car, wrap yourself around a lamp-post with the cornering beast; the stretch limousine, and crush everything under the mighty weight of the garbage truck! Many of the cars are really cool to drive, and all of them can be yanked apart and restructured in your garage. Although the bodywork can't be changed, you can tweak the braking level, grip and steering of every motor before testing it out on a special practice course. There's also that infamous tank; where every time you brake, a cannon launches some killing ordnance into the city; causing havoc on a mammoth scale (almost like a mini-game of *Tokyo Wars*, in fact). However, for the half-dozen seminal motors, there's an equal number of duffers with short-falls that just can't be overcome. Quite why you'd ever ride the useless scooter around a city is beyond me... unless you're a Mod.

Firstly, Ascii should be rewarded for bringing this game out; it's a whole load of original fun that'll keep you entertained for hours the first time you play. Sure, this is an enhanced version of the final *Die Hard Trilogy* game with less levels but greater amounts of stuff to break, but that's no bad thing. You see, you've got great control over the vehicles you own (starting with four and ending with a massive 22!), two views of the road and the ability to twiddle with the controls until they're ideally suited to your driving style. But the main fun comes with the destruction; crunching bicycles under tire tread and watching signs fly over your hood as your car slowly crumples in



DEVELOPER - CLIMAX

PUBLISHER - ASCII

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - EASY

AVAILABLE - NOW



CHIEF HAMBLETON
The bestial offspring of *Ridge Racer* and *Twisted Metal*... minus the longevity.



TICKETS, PLEASE!!



real-time in front of your eyes. The first time you crash through a shopping mall, you'll choke on your own salivation; there's simply so much to demolish! Of course, carnage isn't the whole game; you must race from your starting position, through the level, to the end and freedom. No laps, no repeated courses, just a race for impunity! Evade those cops! Jeeyah!

Extra cars are awarded depending on how you completed the level (in under four minutes, by causing millions of dollars damage or no damage at all, and other, more cunning ways), and then you're obliged to re-race your course with a new and hopefully improved machine. After completing the three courses, there's little else to find (except those cars you're missing), and this is where the game ultimately fails. There's little longevity to the title, and only so many ways to blow up a gas station... I couldn't find backwards or mirrored versions of the courses (come on Climax, that's like not finding a big head mode in a 3D fighting game!); a glaring oversight which would have added weeks to the gameplay. Plus, once you've found the fastest way through the course you're playing, you'll never need to find another route, meaning the massive play areas soon become obsolete. If Ascii tweaks this by adding mirrored/backwards courses and perhaps an extra mission taking place on the Practice course (which is hardly ever used), I'd be much happier recommending this title, especially when there's all the other flaws to consider...

There's loading. *Muchos* loading, and needless loading. Restart the track after a nasty spin and you don't immediately zip off (like, say, in *Ridge Racer*). No, you're 'treated' to the same loading screen as the track is reloaded into memory; a needless waste of time. Not as needless as the real-time 'intro' to each level though, which lasts about ten seconds and you can't skip through it. "Yes, I've just robbed a store and I'm making a getaway. I KNOW this! Please let me start my game now!" There's also some major graphical glitching going on (cars can become stuck 'in' walls, you can 'shudder' through drone cars), some pop-up in places and some pixelly texture-maps on close-up objects (the people leaping out of the way with their one frame of animation look decidedly... 4 bit!) and these minor problems (along with some *Jet Moto* inspired rock music which wasn't to my taste) mar an otherwise enjoyable (but short) racing experience. The PlayStation looks like it was taken to its graphical limits with *Felony 11-79*.

But hey, don't get me wrong; *Felony 11-79* is a superb car-crash through a city with loads of nooks and crannies to investigate and an entire transport system to wreck. However, the lack of longevity, coupled with some graphical issues cut my career as a wanted desperado extremely short (and we're still wondering why Ascii called the game *Felony 11-79* as that's a failure to appear in court). Racing fans can delight... for days rather than weeks. **CH**

You want secret routes through every level? Well you'd better find them then; cuz there's loads available! Top of the chart in the "coolest alternative route through a city" category are the subways. Find the entrance, careen down the steps, skid through (and I mean *through*) the turnstiles and onto the actual underground tracks!! Swerve past the train (or smash it for a princely sum of money) and zoom to the next station where you'll emerge to continue your carnage! Also watch for roads behind seemingly impassable billboard signs; crash through these for secret thoroughfares which shave seconds off your race times!



DESTROY EVERYTHING!



Well, almost everything. Not buildings, you understand, as they're simply too tough (even for a tank). And not those brittle knee-high wooden fences at the side of the road either, because then you'd be traversing outside the play area and the game would crash. But everything else can be crushed, and the feeling is extremely satisfying (and also rewarding; every signpost, vehicle, potted plant and table you wreck earns you cold hard CASH!!). Swerve past that cop car, regain the control of your vehicle after scaling a grass bank and plunge straight through a hotel sign, the main hotel foyer and out the other side! Laugh as the hotel guests scream and shriek! Chortle as furniture flies in all directions! Moan as you veer into a gas station and wreck your car!

SYNDICATE WARS

As one of the first titles announced for the PlayStation, *Syndicate Wars* has been in development for well over two years. Personally, I'm a bit confused as to where all this time has been spent. While this version has many improvements over the original, such as the addition of fully polygonal backgrounds and "real time" control over your characters; the slow frame rate, problematic controls and tiny, PC-reminiscent sprites could turn off many "spoiled" PS owners.

At the very start of the game, you are asked to select what faction you will represent, the Church of the New Epoch or the EuroCorp Syndicate. The Church of the New Epoch was founded by scientists who developed the mind control chip for EuroCorp. Basically, these opposing groups want to control the population through technology; EuroCorp through its Persuade-atron and the Church through the use of the Indoctrinator. Whichever side you choose, you'll be controlling little agents attempting to quell religious zealots or eliminate the unguided. Generally, it's all about sending your little dudes in to kill whoever is seen as a problem.

As with many PC-to-console conversions, there are a few control issues with *Syndicate Wars*. The characters, while now maneuverable in real time, are almost harder to control than the "point-and-click" movement found in the original; presumably thanks to the ultra sensitive controls. It's also interesting to note

that Bullfrog didn't update the battle engine in accordance with the new gameplay features, as you still have little power to accurately maneuver your character while he's firing at the opposition.

The ability to strafe would have been outstanding...

Syndicate Wars certainly has bright points though, most noticeably in its graphics. The original version's backgrounds, while nice to look at, had some major problems as your character(s) often became lost or stuck behind structures. *SW* fixes this with the addition of backgrounds now totally comprised of polygons, allowing you to "swing" the camera around and find your character with ease. The game is also laced with impressive transparencies, plenty of light sourcing and very cool streaming video "billboards" (complete with lengthy CG cut scenes from other Bullfrog products). Unfortunately, the frame rate isn't always the best, and the sprites are quite small; but these are facets of the game that can be easily overlooked.

If you never played the original *Syndicate*, I doubt the latest incarnation will turn you on to the series. If the action was more intuitive and the graphics a bit more silky smooth, most "newbies" would have found it easier to get into. I can say, however, fans of the original could really take to this latest version. The gameplay is a bit different, but that old strategy/cynical cold-blooded killing aspect is still there, which was exactly what attracted us to *Syndicate* in the first place. **O**



R
REVIEW



DEVELOPER - BULLFROG

OF PLAYERS - 1

PUBLISHER - EA

DIFFICULTY - MODERATE

FORMAT - CD

AVAILABLE - NOW



ORION
WOW! KILLING TINY PEOPLE IS FUN!



Masamune Shiro's epic animated adventure, *Ghost in the Shell*, has become the most successful Japanese Animation title ever in the United States thanks not only to strong marketing but an absolutely unforgettable animation experience. If not for the questionable ending, *Ghost* is flawless anime. It's got story, art, music, detail and that neo-Tokyo aura that I just can't get enough of.

So, to say the least, I was elated when I heard a game (a Japanese-bred game by the Jumping Flash team no less) was on the way. Loosely based on the comic in



which Major Motoko Kusanagi (the female model cyborg) does battle in a living tank, the game is a series of 3D missions that at 60fps will no less than thrill 3D adventure fans. Not only can the tank traverse walls and ceilings but the missions themselves are thoroughly unique and as diverse as any I've seen in the category. Add to this already spectacular mix the best animated intro in the history of gaming and 30 minutes of never before seen *Shell* anime and a high joy factor is achieved. I'll bombard all who care with more *GitS* in the months ahead.

GHOST IN THE SHELL



ONE OF THE GREATEST ANIMATED ADVENTURES OF ALL TIME MAY BECOME ONE OF THE GREATEST ANIME BASED GAMES EVER...



LET'S JUST HOPE THE ENDING'S BETTER!

P
PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - EXACT

OF PLAYERS - 1

PUBLISHER - THQ

DIFFICULTY - ADVANCED

FORMAT - CD

AVAILABLE - SEPTEMBER



CYBER STORM WILL MOTOKO EVER COME OUT OF HER SHELL? OR, BETTER YET, LET ME IN IT!



-MACHINE- HUNTER

Yes, it's the *Machine Hunter* REVIEW! I swear! No more previews, this is it, the last word on *Machine Hunter*! After months of playing and witnessing the development of *MH*, MGM Interactive and Eurocom finally have a product they feel is worthy of gamers everywhere. That's what they say, and this is what I say...

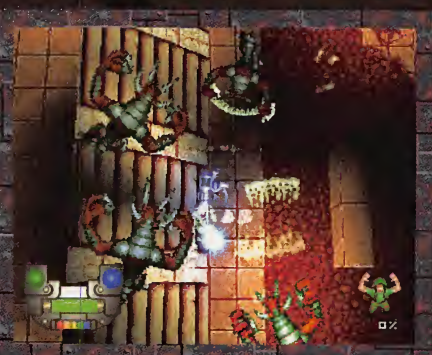
O.K., sorry, I get you all pumped just to throw the customary storyline in your face. Tell you what, I'll keep it short: There's lots of bad guys. A ton of hostages. Even big levels. Something's just gotta be done. Enter the "machines." Nine corporations have

each produced what they believe to be the ultimate mech, but their powerful creations have gone awry. You get to infiltrate the tangled network of corridors in search of hostages, while fending off (and eventually assuming control of) the powerful mechanized creations. Er... just go shoot everything, O.K.?

Here's a quick re-cap of *Machine Hunter's* gameplay. For starters, if you've ever played *Loaded* or *Reloaded* you already know how to play *Machine Hunter*. You'll be experiencing the same familiar overhead shooting, crazy odds, complex level design, and grisly death. *Machine Hunter* takes gameplay a step

further, however, beyond anything in the *Loaded* series, and it's all about *Smash TV* controls. The PS pad button configuration means perfect, instinctual 8-way shooting, with a button for up, down, left, and right shots, and combinations of two buttons for diagonal shots. Your character is fast, maneuverable, and responds instantly to the slightest twitch. And when you hop into a "Machine" suit (explained later), strafing becomes a handy control option. Essentially, as far as this genre goes, *Machine Hunter* has flawless control.

Now, about these "Machine" suits, and why





CLAW FINGER
JENNER-WRIGHT
DM/WM 117-D
CLASS: 5
WEAPON: HARD
LIGHT CUTTER
BRAIN: CORTEX
USE: HEAVY LOADER



FIRE STARTER
AZTECHNOLOGIES
GOLLIATH MK1
CLASS: 7
WEAPON: QUAD
INCINERATORS
BRAIN: GREY MATTER
USE: HEAVY
DUTY WRECKER



FIX-IT
WAGNER INDUSTRIES
WI-500 MK II
CLASS: 4
WEAPON: CLUSTER
GRENADES
BRAIN: GREY MATTER
USE: MAINTENANCE



FOUR FOOT
MEADOWS ELECTRONICS
ME EXTERMINATION
UNIT 363
CLASS: 1
WEAPON: 15MM
ASSAULT GUNS
BRAIN: CORTEX
USE: PEST CONTROL



JOHNNY FIST
LINDHURST & PRIME
IRONCLAD SERIES III
CLASS: 9
WEAPON: ROCKET
LAUNCHER
BRAIN: BATTLE BRAINS
USE: CLOSE COMBAT



LONG ARM
LINDHURST & PRIME
VANGUARD SECURITY
CLASS: 5
WEAPON: HIGH
ENERGY BEAM
BRAIN: CORTEX
USE: LAW
ENFORCEMENT



GREEN BACK
AXEL-BRYANT CORP
CENTURION VT-200
CLASS: 3
WEAPON: TWIN
50MM CANNON
BRAIN: BATTLE BRAINS
USE: LONG
RANGE ATTACK



LOCKJAW
AZTECHNOLOGIES
RO-VAC V
CLASS: 2
WEAPON: GRENADE
LAUNCHERS
BRAIN: GREY MATTER
USE: INDUSTRIAL
CLEANER



**LAUGHING
CAVALIER**
THOMAS WATERMAN
CHILDS PLAY SERIES III
CLASS: 3
WEAPON: 9MM
MACHINE GUN
BRAIN: NEURO-TECH
USE: ENTERTAINER

you should be hunting for them. Most of the enemies are humanoid, but very often you'll be attacked by robots. Survive the barrage of gunfire and shoot 'em down 'til they're disabled, then climb aboard. Now the gift of strafing is yours, as well as an all-new arsenal of Machine-specific weaponry. With Uzis, grenade launchers, and flamethrowers on your side, the walls will be splashed red with even more gore!

The levels are divided into multiple objectives, primarily based upon the short story text that appears before each level. For example, one level is introduced by text describing a captured capital city. Now, you won't be searching out specific areas of this "capital" to complete the level, but there's a set number of foes to eliminate and a calculated number of items and hostages to recover. Your success will be monitored at the end of every level through kill, item, and hostage percentages (*Doom*-style), so, ultimately, it's your call. I tend to pay closer attention to these objectives in the two-player mode, when, at level's end, your stats are compared side-by-side. For the shooter fan who plays for fun, not perfection, surprisingly good percentages can be attained just by skillfully blowing through the crowds (like you've always known how to do). No problem.

Wait! A little problem: The annoying mech suits, those "machines" you're trying to take control of, are a pain in the butt to destroy! Seriously, you'll be fighting one single mech for almost two minutes if you're a human, and almost a full minute if you're in another suit. What's up with that? These are standard enemies,

not bosses, and there's plenty of 'em. So why make destroying them such a long, tedious task? It's not like the game needed the extra difficulty, and it does nothing to add to the intensity. I just kept saying, "Yeah, you can die anytime now." This is a shooter! I want the little guys to die quickly so I can move on to the next victim, you know?

Alright, admittedly this review has been a little moody. That's what happens when you know absolutely everything there is to know about a game, and you've been playing it for months on end. So I know enough to tell you that it's very big, extremely challenging, and easy on the eyes and ears. Now if only those friggin' Machines would die faster, this would be a truly great shooter, but as is, it's just (just?) really good. Now, go forth and kill. **G**



DEVELOPER - EUROCOM

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

PUBLISHER - MGM

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

FORMAT - CD

AVAILABLE - AUGUST



GLITCH

"Die, die, die!" A great little shooter!

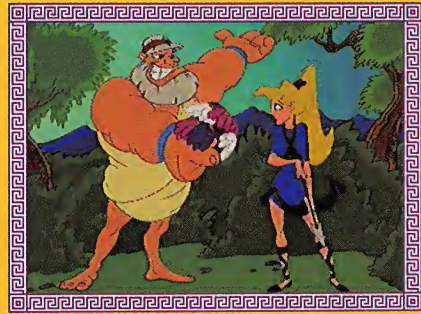
**IF BATTLING THE
CYCLOPS AND THE
FOUR-HEADED HYDRA
ISN'T FUN ENOUGH,
YOU CAN ALWAYS
GO TO HADES.**





← In addition to all the other freaky creatures, you'll have to battle a boar. Which is anything but a bore.

Zeus not only has to conquer Hades, → but also conquer the heart of Atlanta. (A Herculean task, indeed.)



In *Herc's Adventures*, unlike life, to have a happy ending, you'll have to wind up in hell. After all, that's where you must duel with Hades, god of the underworld, to save civilization.

STRENGTH OF CHARACTER. You'll go

into battle as one of three heroic, mythological characters, each one with unique powers:

Hercules possesses super strength.

Atlanta has lightning speed. And,

Jason - savvy street smarts.

WEIRD WEAPONS. Sure, you get the usual arrows, slingshots and swords. But,

you can also arm yourself with ray guns, houses, sheep and inflatable cows.

EVEN WEIRDER BAD GUYS.

Freaky weapons are perfect for fighting even freakier enemies:

The four-headed Hydra, snake-haired Medusa, sword-swinging skeletons, crazy clowns, nasty

Martians and more. *GamePro* says "Challenging bosses, humorous

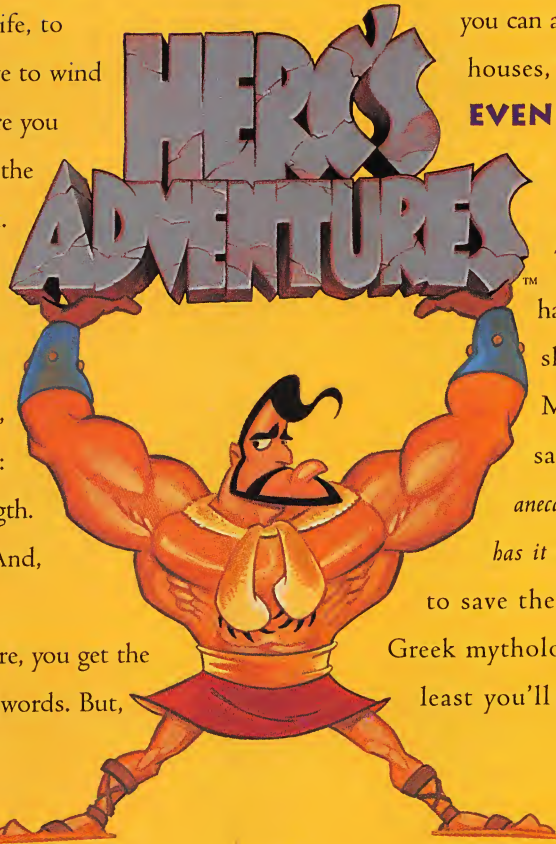
anecdotes, and gigantic landscapes - *Herc's*

has it all." In the end, it's up to you

to save the world in this crazy twist on

Greek mythology. And, if you fail? Well, at

least you'll die laughing.



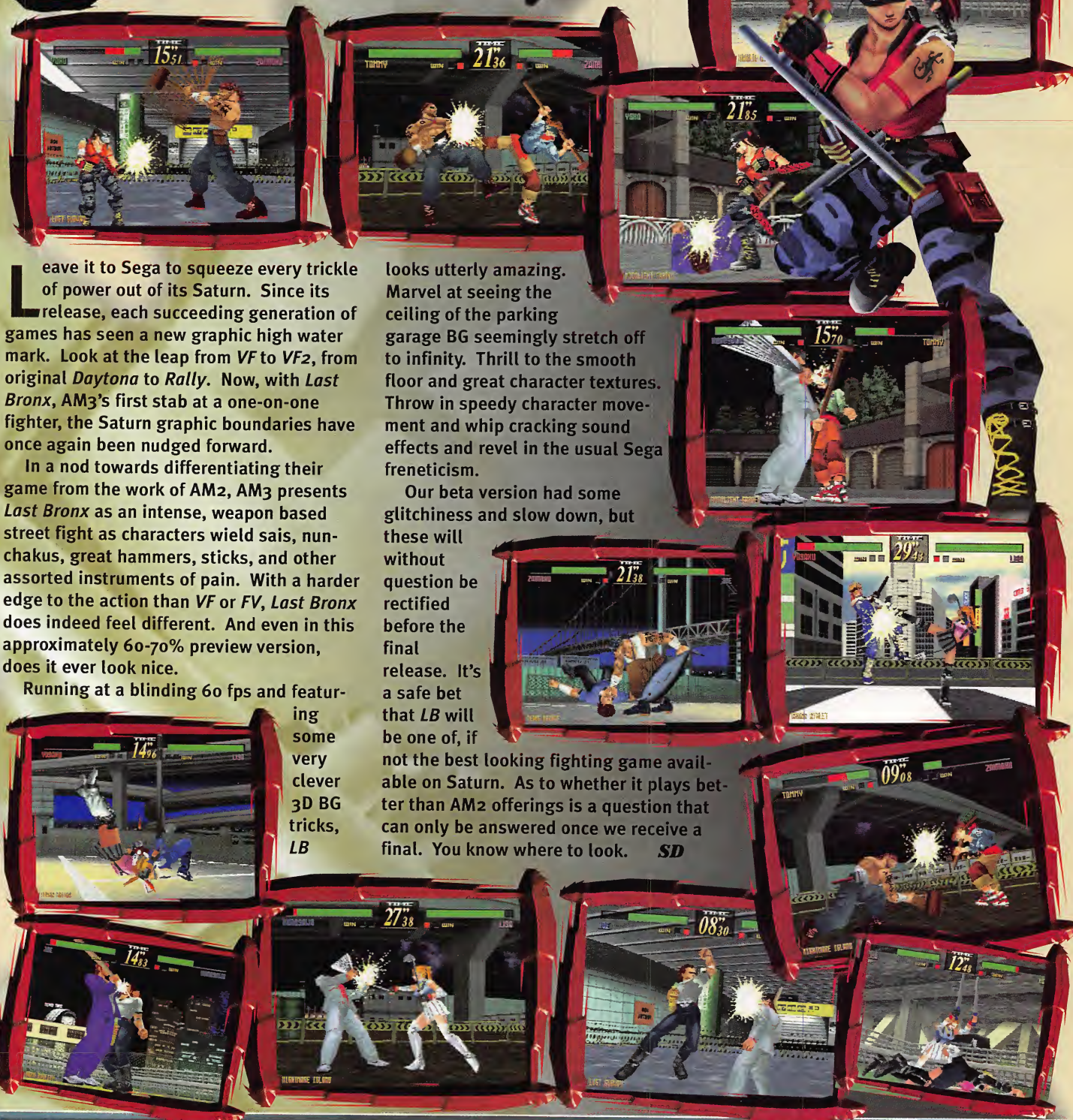
← So many Martians, so little time! And, to make matters worse, they've got Jason surrounded with ray guns.

Unfortunately for Atlanta, the Cyclops → has a huge appetite for destruction. Not to mention beautiful warriors.



<http://www.lucasarts.com>

LAST BRONX



Leave it to Sega to squeeze every trickle of power out of its Saturn. Since its release, each succeeding generation of games has seen a new graphic high water mark. Look at the leap from *VF* to *VF2*, from original *Daytona* to *Rally*. Now, with *Last Bronx*, AM3's first stab at a one-on-one fighter, the Saturn graphic boundaries have once again been nudged forward.

In a nod towards differentiating their game from the work of AM2, AM3 presents *Last Bronx* as an intense, weapon based street fight as characters wield sais, nunchakus, great hammers, sticks, and other assorted instruments of pain. With a harder edge to the action than *VF* or *FV*, *Last Bronx* does indeed feel different. And even in this approximately 60-70% preview version, does it ever look nice.

Running at a blinding 60 fps and featuring some very clever 3D BG tricks, *LB*

looks utterly amazing. Marvel at seeing the ceiling of the parking garage BG seemingly stretch off to infinity. Thrill to the smooth floor and great character textures. Throw in speedy character movement and whip cracking sound effects and revel in the usual Sega freneticism.

Our beta version had some glitchiness and slow down, but these will without question be rectified before the final release. It's a safe bet that *LB* will be one of, if not the best looking fighting game available on Saturn. As to whether it plays better than AM2 offerings is a question that can only be answered once we receive a final. You know where to look. **SD**

P
PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - SEGA/AM3

PUBLISHER - SEGA

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - FALL



SUBSTANCE D
Let's all give a Bronx cheer!

DUKE NUKEM



"Aarrgh!!!"

<Clunk!> *THUNK!!* That's the sound Mr. Nukem's been making for the last two hours. These death screams and sounds of flesh exploding into small squishy pieces are the result of a continuous and bloody failing to play through the first level of *Duke Nukem 3D*. To put it simply, I was gunned down like a pig (and most of the time by pigs). Had my legendary gaming skills failed me? Had my gaming stature crumbled to such an extent that I would be forever cast from the GameFan family, only fit to write 'Pro-tips'? Of course not. It's just that our latest version of Duke Nukem for the Saturn has some of the most accurate and downright pesky foes I've ever engaged in close combat.

First of all, the Saturn conversion of *Duke Nukem 3D* is coming along extremely well. The frame rate is creeping up past the 20fps mark, there's some extra lighting effects that all of the other versions don't have (a *PowerSlave*-like light-sourcing that spices the action up) and all of the weapons have now been implemented. Those tasteful strippers have made the game intact and without censorship (none of your conservative family values of Mr. Nintendo here!), the textures on the wall maps are well-detailed, and although parts of many of the levels are missing (entryways have disappeared due to memory constraints), everything looks solid, well-defined and atmospheric, despite some minor enemy glitching.

The only real problem I've encountered so far stems from the controls and the actual AI of the enemies. The analog control moves Duke forward at about half the speed of the digital version (rendering it pointless, especially as you can't use it to look up), strafing is about three times too slow as it should be (you're tip-toeing to the side of your enemy now, and my favorite tactic of circle-strafing an enemy is now next to useless), and you've actually got to pause the game to grab items from your inventory. However, the major issue I have is the fact you've got to hold down X to look up and down (meaning your thumb needs to spasm at lightning speeds to fire your weapon afterwards), making shooting at flying enemies extremely difficult. Especially when those enemies are manic sharpshooters that can cut you down in two hits... We tried over and over to take down just two LARD police officers, but without avail. They shot us from behind walls, took two shotgun blasts and then kept on coming, and generally infuriated the hell out of me. I'm hoping for some tightening of the controls and more mellow enemies in the next version we receive...

And then, of course, comes the question; "do I really want to play a three-year old PC port-over?" Of course I do, this is Duke Nukem, the coolest 3D corridor character around. And where else can you hear your character use the word "bastard" (albeit in a 4bit sampling piece of speech)? Huh? There's a whole lot of fun to be had with Saturn *Duke Nukem 3D*, and providing Lobotomy cleans up the problems I've detailed, I'll be more than happy to gun my way through Duke's apocalyptic wasteland just one more time... Just remember, if anyone can port-over *Duke Nukem 3D* intact, it's the Lobotomy guys (listen, we could have had Rage software handling the conversion! They'll certainly be needing work after Saturn *Doom!*). Okay, lock and load, people, I'll be back with an update very soon... **CH**



P
PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - LOBOTOMY

PUBLISHER - SEGA

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2 (NETLINK)

DIFFICULTY - HARD

AVAILABLE - SEPTEMBER



CHIEF HAMBLETON
DO IT!! DO IT NOW!!!
KILL MEEEE!!!

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 you'll
 need
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You know, I have a theory about *MK's* popularity. Actually I have two. Theory one stems from the age-old philosophy that people stick with what they know. Back in 1991 players flocked to *MK* for the novelty blood and digitized graphics (I know I did), and then to *MK2* because it was actually a pretty cool game. Then, once they got the hang of *MK2*, they didn't want to go through the learning process (i.e. ego-bruising) again with some 'new' fighting game, so they just stuck with *MK*. Why waste a quarter sucking at some new game when with minimal practice you can compete at a sequel? It's the Ryu and Ken syndrome applied at game level, and in my opinion, the reason



why American gamers won't give *VF3* a chance. Theory two is the blood.

Whatever the reason, *MK's* bid for world domination continues this month as Midway has put the finishing touches on Saturn *MK Trilogy*, some seven months after the PS and N64 versions first hit the charts. Developers Point of View Inc. have opted for a straight port of the PS version with slightly larger sprites but no transparencies. All 32 characters from all four *MK* games are present, along with their respective backgrounds and finishing moves. All of the minor glitching present in the preview version have been ironed out nicely and the loading, although still a bit long, has been minimized. All in all, *MK Trilogy* for the Saturn is impressive, and the best Saturn *MK* yet. **K**



DEVELOPER - MIDWAY
PUBLISHER - MIDWAY
FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2
DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE
AVAILABLE - JULY



KNIGHTMARE
It's gotta be the blood!



MRC

MULTI RACING CHAMPIONSHIP

Two months ago, Nintendo 64 owners had no 'realistic' racing games to play on their fledgling console (unless your racing season stars a princess and a plumber, you fancied donning a wetsuit, or you call the laughable *Cruis'n USA* a 'racing' game). Lately, we've been inundated by them and that's marvelous news for yours truly, who loves to carve up some tarmac as much as the next gibbering madman. Now comes the turn of Ocean (via Imagineer and Genki) to present their latest driving force, a racer with the catchiest

title around... *Multi Racing Championship!* Yes, now you can experience true 64-bit power as you compete a multiple number of times in a championship where you... race. Ah, so that's what the title means.

However, ladies and gentlemen... before you and I start our engines, I have a little quiz for you: Which 32-bit racer hasn't been (ahem) 'honored' by a Nintendo 64 equivalent yet then? Okay, here's a clue; last month, you'll have seen previews of

Top Gear Rally and *Extreme G* (the titles *Sega Rally* and *Wipeout XL* strangely spring to mind...). That's right; *Ridge Racer*. Well, fret ye not, gentle reader, for *Multi Racing Championship* is a stunning 'tribute' to Namco's *RR* trilogy. Of course, any game which borrows heavily from the *RR* formula is bound to be good, so I prepared myself to be mightily impressed.

You see, there's all the aspects of the *RR* elixir in *MRC* which almost guarantees success. Firstly, there's some extremely cool motors to choose from. Next, you've got three different tracks to zip about, the obligatory 'secret' cars, mirrored courses, a Time Trial (where the secret cars are faced) and a 'kerazy' announcer. Mix 'em all together, slap it in a cartridge, throw it out there with the half dozen other Nintendo 64 games and laugh all the way to the bank. Well, to *MRC*'s credit, the game also has a two-player mode, a car workshop (where your tires, brakes and spoilers can all be tweaked) and various routes



TAKE TO THE TRAILS FOR SOME INTENSE RACING ACTION!

throughout each course (mostly off-road shortcuts to the longer-but-less-fraught tarmac circuit). The result is some serious seat-of-the-pants arcade-style racing where weaving in front of mad CPU opponents becomes the norm, and utilizing your rear-view mirror and cutting up enemy drones trying to pass you is second nature.

Once you've clicked your way through the options, fiddled with your automobile and revved for the start, you'll begin your journey around the first circuit, powersliding around every corner (in exactly the same manner as in *RR*; accelerate off, brake and turn, accelerate, steer out of the turn), find the easy-to-spot secondary routes which shave valuable seconds off your lap times, and pass all those rivals for a stab at first place. Then you'll progress to the medium course (complete with snow sections, jumps and dirt tracks), before finally challenging the tricky final advanced circuit; a town-and-country setting, complete with windmills and a waterfall you can drive through.





These courses are remarkable examples of excellent texturing, cunning sub-routes and intentionally-placed corners to prevent that bane of racing titles; pop-up. There's very little scenic building going on the background (just the

odd glitch of distance buildings pinging into view), but what I found strange was the eerie ethereal mist which hung about the entire tracks; it's as if some giant barbecue is going on just out of sight and the smoke's descending to obscure your view slightly. But hey, it's better than steering around in hideous amounts of fog...

Actually, the steering control is exceptional; just like *RR* in fact, but with a lot more feedback (especially when that vibrating box is rumbling away), courtesy of analog power! Wrench the 3D stick too far in one direction and you'll start a powerslide, so brief and subtle flicks of the stick are the order of the day here. Once the steering's been recognized, you'll be wanting your perfect viewpoint, and there's the usual choice of three; chase car, chase helicopter and on-the-hood. The hood cam works best for me as you're granted a great view of the textures up close and personal (where you'll marvel at the lack of pixels and frown at the blurring instead) and have the rear mirror to view upcoming foes.

I really liked the feel of this game; you're treated to an intense white-knuckle ride through amazingly textured arenas in supremely proficient machines, most of which handle like greased pigs. The different weather adds slightly to the lack of tracks, the music's amazingly accomplished for a cartridge title (the usual techno anthems; you know the stuff); but obviously



nowhere near as clear as CD-spoiled audio. The game also never slows down, there's over a dozen vehicles to tweak and twiddle with, *MRC* never glitches and the two-player mode is a marvelous inclusion (same speeds but with a slight loss of trackside detail).

So why am I slightly disappointed with *MRC*? Well, the game's too short and unbelievably easy. I got my hidden cars and backwards courses after half a day's play, and that's just not enough to satisfy my gaming appetite. The CPU opponents are very weak; soup up your car and you'll cruise past even the secret vehicles the very first time you face them. Additionally, if you hit the side of a track, you'll crunch and sometimes stop completely; an immensely irritating problem which shows *MRC*'s car psychics aren't quite up there with *Top Gear Rally's*. If *MRC* had longer courses, more intelligent opponents and a greater challenge I'd be a rabid fan, but as it stands, this suffers in the same way as *WipeOut XL*; a pretty and intense experience that unfortunately lasts for hours and not days. Still, it laughs mockingly at the mutated and shambling offspring of racing games (*Cruis'n USA*); squishing it into the earth with huge hob-nailed boots, and provides Nintendo 64 owners with the first really intense arcade racer (indeed, this *could* have been cobbled together simply to make a fast buck, so I'm grateful that the game's so polished). However, the bottom line is that although there's much fun to be had here, *MRC* is recommended for novice drivers only.

CH



R
REVIEW



DEVELOPER - GENKI

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

PUBLISHER - OCEAN

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

FORMAT - 96 MB CART

AVAILABLE - JULY



CHIEF HAMBLETON
Toss another shrimp on the N64 barbie!



DUKE NUKEM

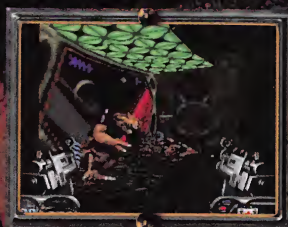
As *Duke Nukem 3D* slowly saturates the entire industry, it seems inevitable that the N64 would receive its own version of the insanely popular PC hit. With excellent versions of *Doom* and *Hexen* appearing on the '64, and *Quake 64* well into development, a perfect *Duke* conversion would further validate the N64's viability as a corridor game machine. After playing the N64 version first-hand at E3, I can confirm a fine translation by GT Interactive, with cool gameplay modes (a la *Hexen*) exclusive to this version.

First-off, a very brief history of *Duke Nukem 3D*. Initially a cult-hit with PC owners, *Duke's* popularity was due in no small part to its crude brand of humour (cussin' 'n nudity) and fantastic level design. Also very popular as a network multi-player game, and the beneficiary of many cool bonus-packs, *Duke Nukem* is certified PC hit.

So, in the wake of all these enhanced versions of *Duke* PC, what exactly can N64 owners look forward to? For one thing, the designers are working completely new architecture design into each of the 28 levels, including esthetic enhancements to the environments—100% exclusive to the N64 version. The weapons will be re-rendered, as well as the explosions (which are now 3D), and the boss enemies will be fully-modeled in 3D—including all-new mid-level and end bosses. New weapons are in as well, and they're very *Turok*-esque from what I've seen (big, freaky alien design, powerful beams).

Secondly, the new modes: In a single player game, players can dump a one to four CPU-controlled Dukes into the fray, set on multiple skill levels, to simulate multi-player co-op play against the computer. OR, in *Hexen 64* fashion, multi-player split-screen modes for two, three, or four players is available, in either co-op, team, or competitive modes. And finally, in an all-new "Meltdown Mode", players enter a mad death race, armed to the teeth, to reach the end of a level. Surprisingly, the frame rate remains consistent during the most ardent multiplayer action.

Duke Nukem 64 will also support the Jolt Pack and Dolby Surround Sound, immersing players even further into the Duke experience. Unfortunately it looks like Saturn owners will be playing the only uncensored Duke at home 'cause the babes are wearing t-shirts and spouting lame "politically incorrect" crap in the '64 version. Oh well, it seems to be an exceptional version regardless (Duke would agree, "Damn I'm lookin' good!"). We'll have extensive updates in upcoming issues.



P
PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - GT INTERACTIVE

OF PLAYERS - 1-4

PUBLISHER - GT INTERACTIVE

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

FORMAT - 96 MB CART

AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER



KNIGHTMARE
"Damn I'm lookin' good!"

1997 E3

atlanta, georgia

And so it was, that on this day, the 19th of June 1997, we did all journey to the sweltering metropolis that is Atlanta. They come from all over the world to look at, play with, buy, sell, and basically show off those elements of goodness in all of our lives: video games. We have come to this place to see and play as well; but most importantly, to observe, so that you may benefit from our trek. For seeing new games is great, but enduring the marathon that is any E3 is indeed a torturous undertaking.

ONLY



INTENDO

SEGA

E3



KONAMI



THE SONY PLAYSTATION



Sony descended on Atlanta with one goal in mind... winning. And win they did. The city made of steel was like a blazing metropolis for three days as awe-struck show goers moved among such never-before-seen games as *Rapid Racer*, *Medievil*, *Crash 2*, *Blasto*, and many many more. And when the airborne swamp that was Atlanta's weather began to take its toll, a visit to the massive Sports Bar atop the giant steel atoll was the hottest ticket in the joint.

Sony

Sony, in just two years, has managed to consume nearly every square inch of gamedom. Sucking up developer support like an all Blob matinee, it's hard to imagine where they'll be in two more....

Although a vast quiver of hot titles were on display inside Sony City, (both 1st and 3rd party games were strewn throughout) a few of Sony's own managed to take center stage. *Crash 2*, for one, which many regard as game of the show, looked absolutely gorgeous, but perhaps more exciting because we did not expect them were *Beastorizer*, a shocking 60fps fighter from Hudson Japan, *Medievil*, a spooky 3D adventure with textures from above, and *Rapid*

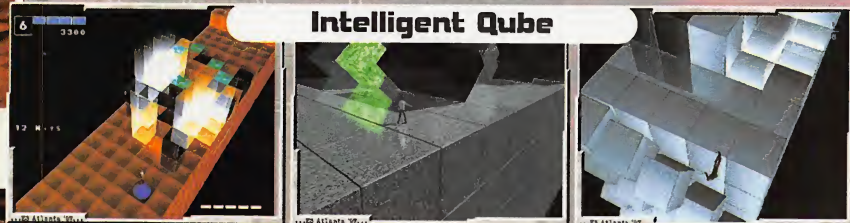
Racer, a Model 2-caliber visual feast of a speedboat racer. *Blasto*, Sony's first ever in-house character-driven action platformer (a biggy for all hardware giants) was too early to judge but based on where *Blasto's* design-



Crash 2



Intelligent Qube



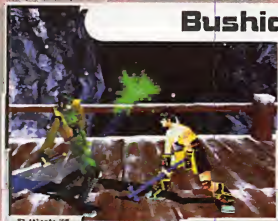
Cardinal Syn



Jet Moto 2



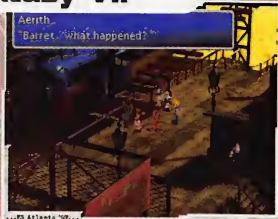
Steel Reign



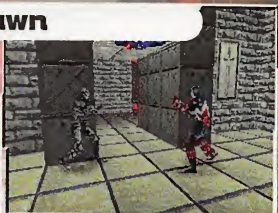
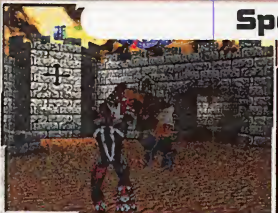
Bushido Blade



Final Fantasy VII



Exodus



Spawn



Medieval



Parappa the Rapper



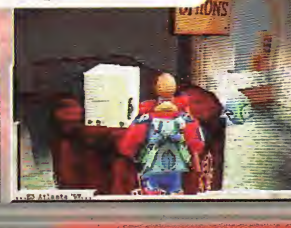
Rapid Racer



CoolBoarders 2



Rosco McQueen



Blasto



ers say they're taking this all new action hero (with Phil Hartman's witticisms in tow), it sounds mighty impressive. The levels you've been seeing are now almost completely textured (save the floor which would just muck things up), and new ones include free-form gameplay environments. It's all about software mip-mapping and z-buffering, friends. If Sony has it their way, Blasto will be a near seamless, action-packed adventure with visuals to die for... and phenomenal gameplay.

As expected, FF7 made a bold statement, complete with an overhead big screen presentation inside what could only be described as an RPG oasis. I wonder if anyone realized that they showed nearly the entire ending on video? Regardless, FF7 will undoubtedly go down in game history as the

Porsche Challenge



finest RPG ever. And rightly so, it is epic.

On the alternative side of the fence, Parappa was rappin' all over the place. Besides the giant mobile Parappa himself (itself?), one could slam to the beat on a Volkswagen-sized PS controller. Sony deserves props for introducing Parappa and Tail of the Sun to the US this year.

There was one mild disappointment among all this splendor however, and that (surprisingly) was Spawn. The capeless, club-footed (we're talkin' tree trunk) Spawn looked like a polygonal nightmare with a stick up his butt. And the 3D-adventure-meets-pseudo-VF gameplay just looked, well, extremely un-Spawn like. I wouldn't be surprised if this one sees a major delay.

Overall, it was Sony's show this year and they show no signs of letting up.



Beastorizer



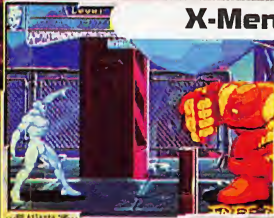
Acclaim

Acclaim's "It's a brand new game" theme could be seen everywhere. Magic: The Gathering: Armageddon, a two-player action game based on the popular series, was being shown, along with Riven (sequel to Myst), featuring a deeper quest and refined character interaction. The biggies included, of course, Batman & Robin (which looks fantastic) and the 60 fps 3D shooter Forsaken. Two Marvel titles are also coming soon: Fantastic 4, a four player 3D action game, and X-Men: Children of the Atom (finally!). A solid, varied line-up overall.

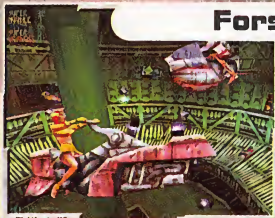
Batman & Robin



X-Men: COTA



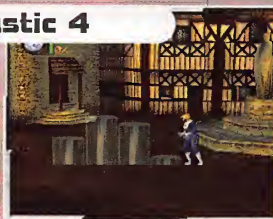
Forsaken



Magic: The Gathering



Fantastic 4



Accolade

Test Drive 4



Accolade scored big at the E3 with Test Drive 4. Developed by the ultra-talented Reflections (responsible for Destruction Derby) TD4 looked and played just awesome. Accolade had refreshments and a cool meeting room with A/C!... Nice 'chatchkies' as well.

Activision

Activision had a monster booth at this year's show, with a huge rotating mech promoting Heavy Gear for PC propped out front.

Quake 2 and Hexen 2 also brought huge crowds on the PC side. On the console side, Grand Tour Racing '98 just recently picked up a Car & Driver license, Apocalypse (starring Bruce Willis) was a major draw and Pitfall 3D featured some impressive looking new boss encounters. The recently-acquired Nightmare Creatures, however, stole the show at Activision.

Apocalypse



Nightmare Creatures



Pitfall 3D



GT Racing



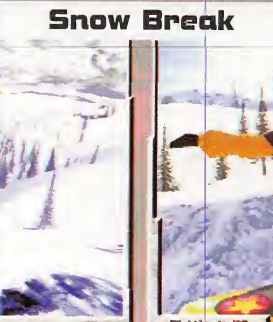
Atlus

Atlus showed Ogre Battle and an impressive new Ski and Snowboarding game. Tactics Ogre is coming soon as well.

Ogre Battle



Snow Break



Mass Destruction



Colliderz



ASC

ASC surprised everyone with the acquisition of BMG's Mass Destruction. They also announced

TNN's Outdoor Bass Tournament, the cyber-hockey game Colliderz, and Hardcore 4X4 2. Most impressive, though? One, which looked great; well on track to being one of the year's best action titles.

Hardcore 4x4 2



One



Carom Shot



Master Of Monsters



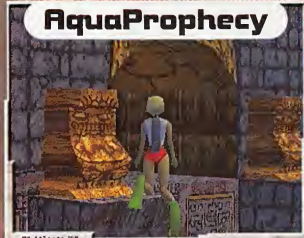
Scheduled for a 1st Q. '98 release Moon is perhaps the most unique RPG I've seen this decade. Besides breathtaking visuals the surreal story and intuitive gameplay (a mixture of reality and fantasy planes of consciousness) will surely intrigue all who play it. Felony just rocks and ClockTower (a spooky adventure that actually provides some real scares) will surely find a following over here... Shadow Madness, a fully rendered 3D RPG (that's looking excellent), further shows ASCII's commitment to RPGs and AquaProphecy is just plain cool looking.

ASCII

Felony 11-79



AquaProphecy



Shadow Madness



Moon



ClockTower



BMG had a vast array of PS wares, including Special Ops-U.S. Army Rangers, a 3D action strategy title; Grand Theft Auto, an overhead driver; Tanktics, a real time 3D strategy title; The Tour, a virtual music program featuring The Who's Roger Daltry; and Monkey Hero, a 3D adventure game. Lookin' good, all around.

BMG

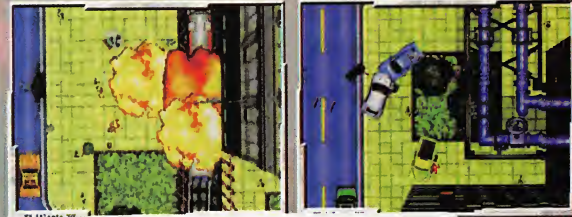
Spec Ops



Tanktics



Grand Theft Auto



Monkey Hero





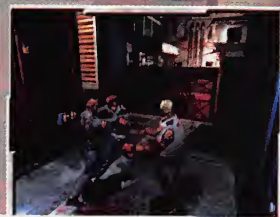
Capcom



By far the most impressive Capcom booth seen at an E3 (huge Felicia, MegaMan and Akuma statues, a massive wall mural and rotting zombies everywhere!), Capcom featured one of the greatest line-ups of the entire show. Aside from the cool "chicken" we grabbed (squishy Resident Evil eyeballs!) and the Street Fighter 3 tournament (where the Enquirer managed a very respectable second—for the third year running!), the actual games whipped up gamers into an excitable frenzy.

Most eye-popping was Street Fighter EX for the PlayStation; running at exactly the same speed (60fps) and detail (phenomenal) as the arcade; so successful was SF EX that gamers were hard-pressed to even get a play on it!

Unfortunately, Resident Evil 2 was shown in video form only, but what we saw shocked us; flame-throwers, huge bloated zombies and insane backdrops make Resident Evil 2 the most eagerly-awaited PlayStation game in existence! Also present were MegaMan Neo, a 3D adventure for the PlayStation which looked... intriguing, Marvel Super Heroes, SF Collection (arcade perfect renditions of past Street Fighters) and their latest arcade entry, Darkstalkers 3: Jedah's Damnation, featuring the most marvelous 2D ever witnessed. Of course, the already-pre-viewed Resident Evils were there (RE: Director's Cut on PS and the Saturn original), as was Capcom Nation, a new quarterly magazine which shocked the world with a stunning announcement—Pocket Fighter—super deformed Street Fighter and Darkstalkers characters battling it out!!



Resident Evil 2



Marvel Super Heroes



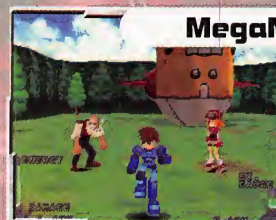
MegaMan Neo



Breath of Fire 3



Darkstalkers 3: Jedah's Damnation



Pocket Fighter



SF Collection

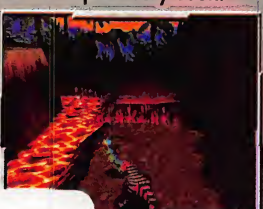
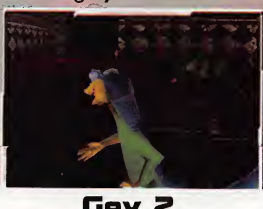
Crystal Dynamics

Akuji



Show stressin' you out? A little tense? Drop by Crystal, check the twins (hotty pots... burnin' hotties) and then er, play GEX and try to re-focus. Crystal even had a masseuse for those brave enough to disrobe at an E3. You already know all about GEX which many considered game of the show and Pandemonium 2, the much anticipated 1st major Crystal sequel. Akuji, a free-roaming 360° action/adventure, has voodoo power and lots of blood... Alrighty then. We'll have a full report very soon.

Pandemonium 2



Gex 2

Skull Monkeys



...PS Atlanta '97...



...PS Atlanta '97...

Dreamworks



...PS Atlanta '97...



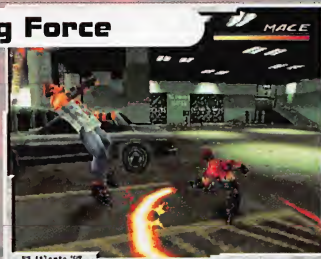
...PS Atlanta '97...

Apart from Lost World, which EA is distributing, Dreamworks' very floral display showcased the side-scroller Skull Monkeys. Highly animated clay characters and excellent Doug TenNapel humor, combined with 20 detailed worlds and over 100 levels, makes Skull Monkeys one to watch.

Fighting Force



...PS Atlanta '97...



...PS Atlanta '97...

Ninja



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Deathtrap Dungeon



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...PS Atlanta '97...

Eidos



...PS Atlanta '97...

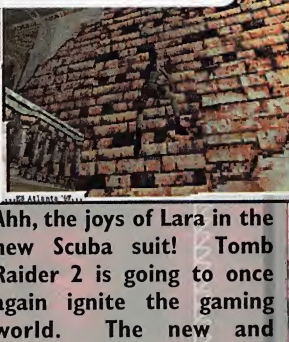


...PS Atlanta '97...

Tomb Raider 2



...PS Atlanta '97...



...PS Atlanta '97...

Ahh, the joys of Lara in the new Scuba suit! Tomb Raider 2 is going to once again ignite the gaming world. The new and improved Lara features more polygons adding up to a smoother appearance, and her animation has been made even more spectacular. Dramatic lighting, massive outdoor environments and a much more involved and interactive story may again win Lara the crown. Bravo, Core & Eidos, you're doing one helluva job with her. Rumor has it we'll be seeing a lot more of Lara in the future, perhaps in movies, and assorted merchandise. No formal announcement has been made but we're quite sure one's coming. Ninja looks hot although it's still 6-8 months away, and you can read all about the next generation street fighter Fighting Force and the all new Deathtrap Dungeon elsewhere in this issue.

Populous 3



...PS Atlanta '97...

Although a vast majority of EA's booth was occupied by PC and Sports titles (including a giant EA Sports Hummer limo/meeting room), their selection of PlayStation titles was impressive, to say the least. First off, gamers were crowded around Nuclear Strike, the much-improved sequel to last year's Soviet Strike, which features ten new vehicles to command, along with a vast array of graphical enhancements. The eagerly anticipated JP: The Lost World, was an unexpected surprise (EA's distributing the title) drawing quite the crowds to EA's stylish prehistoric display. ReBoot had its own meeting room (as did Road Rash and EA Sports) all decked out in like guise (EA scores high style points for presentation and friendly atmosphere). The game looks great and plays even better with cool physics and fluid 3D. This could be EA Canada's best yet. Meanwhile, Populous fans went wild when they saw the ultra crisp new 3D landscapes that truly bring the legend to life. It's PC 1st, but headed to console soon after.



The big surprise though was the introduction of an all-new Road Rash being developed for the PS. Behind closed doors, we were able to witness a pre-alpha version of Road Rash 3D, and walked away quite elated. With motion-captured riders & bikes (all featuring a high polygon count), incredible tracks (based on actual satellite images), an amazing interactive storyline too intricate to explain here, and classic gameplay, this long-overdue Road Rash could be EA's biggest PS hit yet.

Nuclear Strike

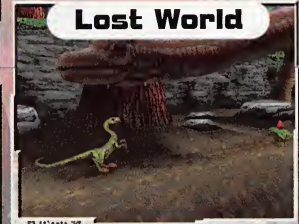


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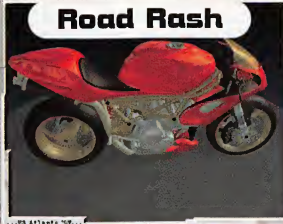
...PS Atlanta '97...

Lost World



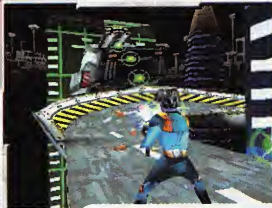
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Road Rash



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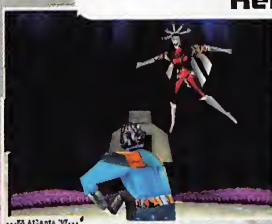
ReBoot



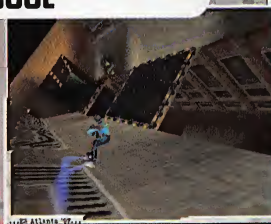
...PS Atlanta '97...



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...PS Atlanta '97...

Fox Interactive



Croc



Prominently displayed at the Fox booth was the amazing Croc. This 3D action/adventure title has some of the cleanest textures ever seen in a free roaming 3D game and features one of the coolest critters since Mario. It's gonna be big. Fox also had an early version of Rebellion's Alien vs. Predator on display. Corridor fans can begin preparation for another memorable hunt.

GT Interactive

GT Interactive had a busy booth (punctuated by a life sized LoWang from Shadow Warrior) with a lot of burning PC stuff, as expected. On the PS front, they were showing Oddworld Inhabitants' Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee, one of the coolest, best looking, and most surreal games you'll

ever have the pleasure of playing. Bug Riders looked interesting, and Critical Depth, SingleTrac's foray into underwater-themed games, was very impressive. But not as impressive as the news that GT bought SingleTrac, easily one of the biggest announcements of the 3-day ordeal. Rounding out the display were

Bug Riders



Duke Nukem 3D, with new levels, weapons, and graphics, and Youngblood, based on the hit comic.

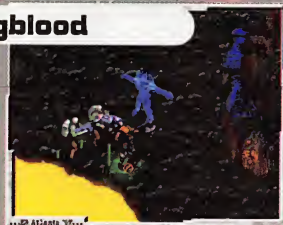
Abe's Oddysee



Critical Depth



Youngblood



Interplay

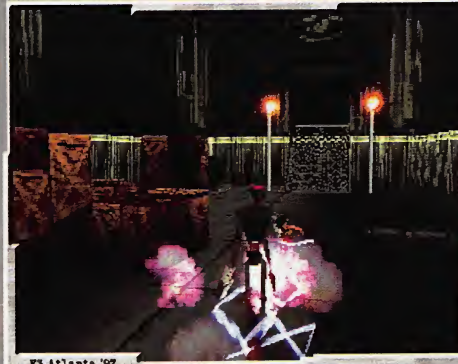
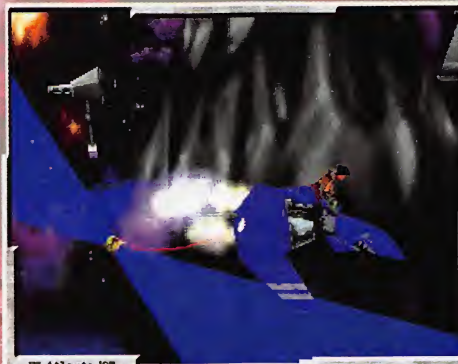
Our final destination at this year's E3 was Interplay and the moment we arrived we wished we had scheduled this meeting first. Not only were our pals from Shiny and Interplay ever-so-cool, but they had a private cafe-like motif where you could just kick it, and the coolest giveaway at the show, a mini fan! So, after 3 days of heat you literally wore, we found relief. Oh well, it came in handy at the airport (we waited 6 hours for the weather to clear in the terminal from hell). As far as the games were concerned, well, let's just say that Interplay is poised for a record year.



Red Asphalt



Wild 9's



Literally every game in their arsenal is a potential hit. Red Asphalt is astounding, boasting an engine that defies logic running at 30fps with masses of detailed polys flying by (we'll have a feature next month) and Wild 9 is on nearly every editor's top 10 list for game of the show.

Crime Killers



This is trademark Shiny all the way. David Perry and company's dedication to quality seems ten fold. Not only is 9's going to shock you but the latest technology out of the Shiny camp is actually so revolutionary I'm not sure I'm even ready to accept it. See page 95 for the lowdown on Messiah.

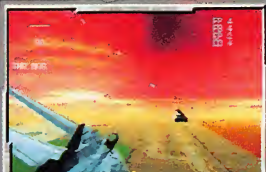
Rounding out Interplay's PS line is an interesting new racing blaster with potential, Crime Killers. The game's early, but has that whole Blade Runner/Neo Tokyo thing goin' on. We'll keep you up to date on this one as info becomes available. Check out more hot Interplay info in the N64 section...

Kuri Skunk



Jaleco's obviously been shopping overseas and they've come up with 4 pretty cool titles. Most prominent is Kuri Skunk, well actually it's Coolie Skunk (in Japan, the letters L and R are pronounced identically, so I guess when Jaleco heard the name they just figured it must be right), a 2D platformer rich in color and parallax. Bombing Island finds the clown from the PS Krazy Chase in a Bomberman-like setting, Wing Over is a formidable flight sim and Project Gaiaray is a Virtual On-style 3D fighter.

Jaleco



Project Gaiaray

Wing Over

Bombing Islands

Konami

Castlevania SotN



Konami was the place for 3rd party PlayStation games. Aside from the beautiful Castlevania X (which we finally got to see in English), the intense Salamander (Lifeforce) and PS RPG number 3 Other Life Azure Dreams, they had a tape of indescribably-awesome Metal Gear Solid playing constantly. Let's just say the latest Metal Gear looks so amazing, it will break you. One scene has Solid Snake in a dimly lit room, firing at an impressively-cloaked enemy (total Predator); meanwhile paper is flying around, glass is shattering and...and...gah. There's little question as to why many people labeled it as game of the show... Also of note, Suikoden 2 was not on display, but Konami swears we will see it in America next year.

Metal Gear



Azure Dreams

Star Wars Teras Kasi



I hope it was early because it certainly had issues. Star Wars Teras Kasi was the lone new PS game on display for LucasArts.

LucasArts

Malofilm

Malofilm needed only one game to make a bold statement... Jersey Devil. This inspired 3D adventure has excellent play and personality to burn.

Jersey Devil



MGM Interactive

Machine Hunter garnered much of the attention at the MGM stand, while behind-the-scenes meetings offered brief glimpses of Return Fire 2 and WarGames. Both games look fantastic, engaging players in intense warfare over huge 3D landscapes, with classic musical scores from some of MGM's finest films.

Return Fire 2



WarGames

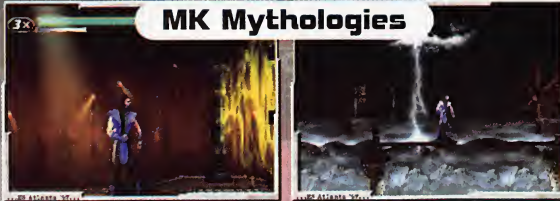


Maximum Force



Midway, as usual, had a great showing at this years expo. On the PS side, MK Mythologies and the all new (and extremely cool) Rampage were the stand-outs. Anyone who's been in the game long enough to remember the original Rampage should make it a point to take a trip down memory lane rendered style. Maximum Force, the sequel to Area 51, is on the way as well. When Gretzky showed up the place went mad! Check out the rest of Midway's software in the SS, N64, and Sports sections. Busy, aren't they?

Midway



MK Mythologies



Rampage



Klonoa



Namco

Namco had it all goin' on with five high powered titles on display for the first time.

Half a dozen Tekken 3 machines sat center stage (showing many of the hidden characters) and those who participated in the T3 tournament were awarded a slick aluminum cased T3 organizer.

It was Namco's PlayStation games that drew the most attention, and on top of the list sits Klonoa, This phenomenal polygonal 2D-in-3D platformer features some of the best visuals ever seen in a polygonal game and is literally seeping with play mechanics. Arguably the best platformer at the show, Klonoa will get the royal GF treatment in the months to come. Also present was Pacman Ghost Zone; the first Namco PS game developed solely in the U.S. Sucked into the Pacman coin-op, it's up to you, as a 3D version of Pacman, to escape the Ghost Zone. Treasures of the Deep is just the coolest (check out the review in this issue), as is Ace Combat 2 (ditto). Time Crisis, the Museum games, Xevious 3D and last but not least, Point Blank, a truly joyous conversion of the 'carnival' arcade shooter round out the Namco PS line. The only major Namco title we didn't see was Tekken 3 on the PlayStation.



Point Blank



Ace Combat 2



Pac Man Ghost Zone



Treasures



V-Rally

V-Rally not only has the best racing graphics we've ever seen on the PlayStation (the weather and lighting effects are amazing) but it has 42 totally separate tracks. 42! Go, Infogrames!

Ocean

Playmate's lifesize MDK character lead the way to two new PS games MDK and Covert Wars. VMX showed up for the 2nd year as well.

Playmates



VMX



MDK

Sirtech

Wrecking Crew



Excalibur



Joe Blow

Joe Blow was on display at Sirtech, and it was actually looking pretty good, enjoying the benefits of a fine 3D platforming engine. But that character

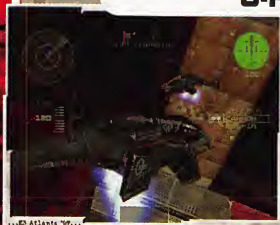
blows! Ha! Also out 'n about was Wreckin' Crew, still early, but talk of Deathmatch modes seemed exciting. Excalibur 2555 is still Sirtech's best, and it's currently being slightly "Americanized" (voices, mainly) for an early fall release.



G-Police



Shadow Master



Psygnosis

Psygnosis, lit up like the Fourth of July and rockin' with techno, looked like something out of the Jetsons. Mark Day greeted us with a smile and a stack of discs! (the man's a professional), whisked us through Psygnosis' stunning '97/'98 line-up and then off he went. This is a great man. I was and am glued to Rascal, their 3D adventure game of infinite possibilities (due in '98) while everyone else is gushing over Colony Wars, a 60fps shooter with maximum force. Everything under the Psygnosis veil looked great and we'll be bringing it to you in the months ahead.



Rascal



Overboard



Rabid

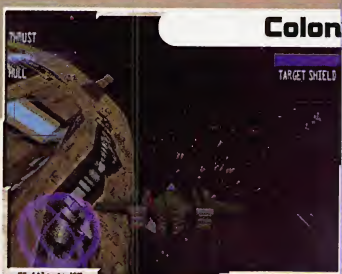
New to the clan of developers, Rabid's Violent Seed is said to be violent. Top down joy is more like it.



Psybadek



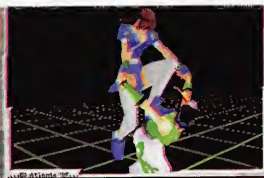
Violent Seed



Colony Wars



Dead or Alive



Tecmo

Tecmo's big attraction this year was Dead or Alive. Only time will tell if the PS version can touch the incredible Saturn translation. Stackers was big news. It's a cool puzzler in the vein of Puyo Puyo that Tecmo will be promoting heavily this fall. Finally, there was Monster Rancher, an excellent Tamagotchi-like creature sim with some truly unique ideas. Fans of Deception listen up: Tecmo has confirmed a sequel and they're VERY excited about the development thus far.

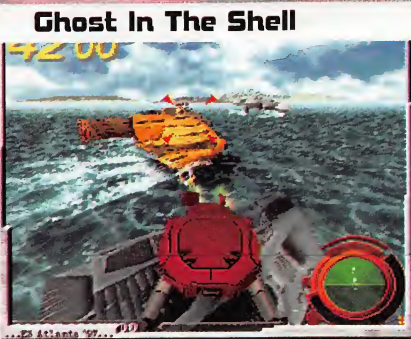
Monster Rancher



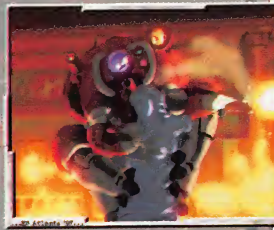
Stackers



Ghost In The Shell



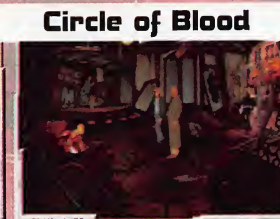
T-HQ



Like all things in life, change is imminent. And for T-HQ, nothing could ring more true. T-HQ has a truly

impressive lineup of quality games both from the U.S. and Japan, including the stellar Ghost in the Shell by renowned developers Exact of Jumping Flash! fame. Bravo is a unique and highly addictive flying racer and Ray Tracers (see GameFan Volume 5, Issue 4) is one of Taito's best ever with smooth 3D and powerful enemies (not to mention a burning ZTT soundtrack). VS. has a way to go as the first 60 fps, U.S.-developed, one-on-one street fighter where actual dialect to match locales is being used. Circle of Blood, an artistic point-'n-clicker, rounds out the PS lineup. Now check out Quest (for the N64) and both wrestling titles. T-HQ... Alrighty.

Circle of Blood



Bravo



VS.



Ray Tracers



Universal

Universal Interactive Studios had but one PS game on display, Running Wild. Call it a racing game with feet as you race bipedal animals around a 60 fps track. The game's got potential. Read all about it on pg. 34.

Running Wild



Hercules



In development side by side with the PC version is Command and Conquer 2. New concepts, hot graphics, C&C 2 has much to prove. The biggest surprise though was Hercules, based on the Disney animated film playing in theatres now. Incredible side-scrolling hack-'n'slash action and amazing 3D bosses took us completely by surprise. We'll have a review next month!

Virgin



THE NINTENDO 64



Par for the course, Nintendo had a massive display complete with areas synonymous with their four major titles of the expo: Banjo-Kazooie, Conker's Quest, Goldeneye, and StarFox. The StarFox arena was a spectacle in its own right. The usual litter of third-party stands that normally surround Nintendo Land were as scarce as I've ever seen, however, something Nintendo intends to remedy in the year ahead. A cartridge price drop was announced and should pave the way...

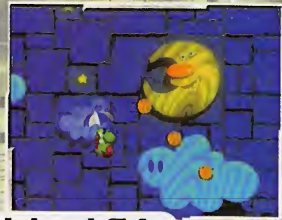
Nintendo

Perhaps the most shocking revelation at Nintendo was what was not on display in playable form; mainly because if they were, Nintendo could have easily given Sony a run for their money: The ever-popular Zelda 64, the stunning F-Zero 64, Enix/Treasure's Mischief Makers, Mother 64, and the mind blowing 2D Yoshi's Island were all on tape only. Chameleon Twist was absent as well. Banjo-Kazooie and Conker's Quest carried things nicely but both are focused squarely on a young demographic and were being compared to Mario in every conversation.

Personally, I think they both look better. Goldeneye is awesome, far exceeding our expectations. Coincidentally, all 3 of these are RARE games. Nintendo's Disc Drive will surely be the focus in '98.



Body Harvest



Yoshi's Island 64



Banjo-Kazooie

F-Zero 64



Conker's Quest

Zelda 64



Tetrisphere

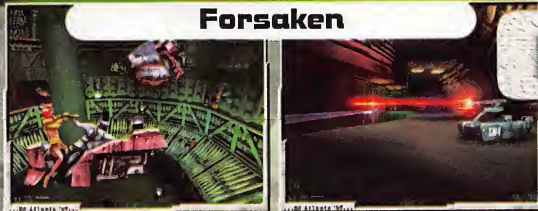
Golden Eye



Extreme G



Forsaken



Acclaim

Extreme G formed the main thrust of Acclaim's N64 presence (Turok 2 is still a ways off). Forsaken will make the 64 bit leap as well.

Duke Nukem 3D



Four player mode, brand-new 3D rendered bosses and weapons, all-new gameplay modes, and even fellow CPU Dukes add immeasurably to the Duke experience. Read all about it on page 72.

BMG's Silicon Valley... has nothing to do with Silicon Valley. It's all about, like, cyborg animals (nanobots) on a space station. I played around with a little sheep for awhile and figured it would be best to just wait for this one before I go off on a rant...

BMG

Silicon Valley



GT Interactive

ClayFighter 63 1/3



Duel Heroes



Bomberman 64



Hudson

Hudson (who should be doing Bonk 64) had 2 N64 titles on display. Bomberman 64 was looking cool, especially the adventure-like one player mode. As for Duel Heroes, their one-on-one Power Ranger-ish 3D fighter is, well, let's just say it's got a ways to go. A long, long way...

Ranger-ish 3D fighter is, well, let's just say it's got a ways to go. A long, long way...

EarthWorm Jim 3D



Interplay

EJW 3D, after being assaulted with too-early-to-show screen shots on-line was running on tape and although still way, way early, looked groovy. CF 63 1/3 is finished and what a job they've done. Besides being the wackiest parody ever (zillion hit combo anyone?) the game plays really well. I could have played all day. Jim is a now a selectable character! We'll have a man-sized review in the September issue.

Top Gear Rally



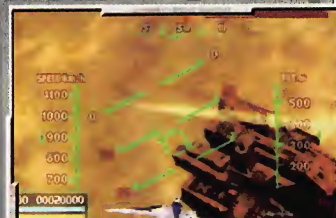
Twisted Edge



McO'river

McO'river's Aerofighters Assault is powered by a Paradigm 3D engine and looked a bit sparse, but very fluid.

Time will tell if flight sim number 2 is on par with the spectacular Pilot-wings.



Aerofighters Assault

Boss Studios' Top Gear Rally is simply fantastic and a new snowboarding title (also from Boss) called Twisted Edge Snowboarding (video footage only) is already in the works!

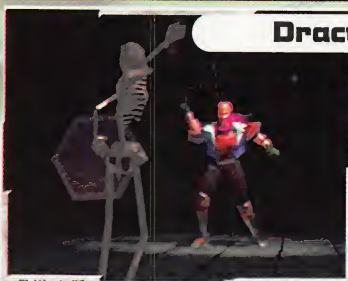
Kemco



Konami

Day one: The news went out that *Mystical Ninja 64* at 128 megs may not make the U.S. scene... I mourned. Day 2: News went out that Nintendo dropped the cart price to developers. Konami green lighted MN 64 shortly after... I went "Geeyah!" One of the best N64 games yet, MN looked absolutely vast and I cannot wait to begin the quest! *Hybrid Heaven*, Konami's Nintendo team's answer to *Metal Gear*, and *Drac 3D* were shown on tape for '98.

Legend of the Mystical Ninja 64



Dracula 3D



Showing quite a quiver of Nintendo 64 titles Midway was a zoo. *Mortal Kombat Mythologies: Sub Zero* kept MK fans busy, while a 3-week build of *Quake 64* from the Doom 64 team raged on looking way too good for how early it was. *Rampage* is



SF Rush



headed down the 64 bit trail and the 3D weapons-based arcade fighter *Mace: The Dark Ages* was early but showing promise. The real star of Midway's show was the nearly completed version of *San Francisco Rush*. One of Midway's best conversions ever, *Rush* has a blistering frame rate, super clean visuals and plays like a banshee. We'll review *Rush* in September and update you on all the rest as info makes its way from Texas.

Midway

MK: Mythologies

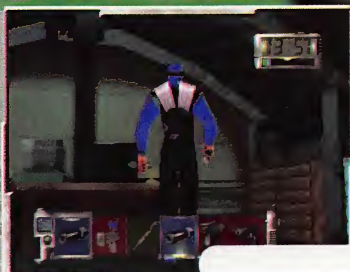


Quake



Mace





Mission: Impossible



Multi-Racing Championship

After starting from scratch after seeing Super Mario 64 and later delaying it again because they were less than elated with the art, Ocean is hell bent on 1) a Christmas release and 2) blowing us all away with a stunning 30fps 3D adventure like we've never seen before.



Ocean

Mission: Impossible, indeed. Props are due for their commitment. MRC is ready to ship and should be out by the time you read this.



Quest 64

Imagineer's been working on Quest for over two years and by the time T•HQ brings it to us early in '98 this is going to be a memorable Action RPG. What we saw at E3 astonished us as the camera zoomed way back and the integrity of the playfields remained intact. The lead character is animated to the teeth (cape and all) and the towns are as vast as any you have ever seen.



We'll begin full blown coverage on Quest the second T•HQ gives us the green light.

T•HQ



Lamborghini 64



shiny new Countach. I dreamed of hopping into it and cranking the AC for 3 days. It lived up to its screen shots as it was plenty smooth, but the game was in need of some tweaking in the gameplay department.

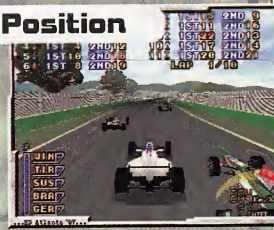
Titus

Wondering what happened to Rayman 2? Well, it became Tonic Trouble, a very Rayman-like adventure with a slightly more serious tone, in a Rayman sort of way. It's a year away (at least) but should prove worth the wait. The music's by the same guy, as is the phenomenal art.



Tonic Trouble

UbiSoft



F1 Pole Position

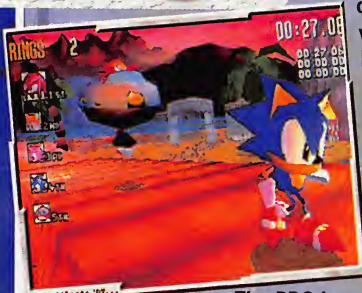
THE SEGA SATURN

While Sega didn't blow the roof off the joint with their new "Blackbelt" (god I hope that's not the name), choice developers did see the hardware behind closed (and bolted shut) doors and said, off the record of course, that it's extremely high powered far beyond any current consoles including Matsushita's M2-bad-it's-never-coming-out. A lack of imports marred things a bit for the good 'ol SS, but overall, with Sonic R and Panzer Saga leading the way, Sega still managed to glisten.

Sega

Despite the less-than-positive vibe going around the show about Sega and the Saturn's diminutive position in the US, their E3 lineup was fairly impressive. Duke Nukem 3D was on display, looking excellent, and it was linked up with other machines to showcase the awesome NetLink mode. Quake was quite amazing—polygonal enemies are in—and stunning frame rates were achieved. Moving on to the major arcade translations, Touring Car Championship was very good, and Last Bronx is simply unbelievable (the BGs and characters look fantastic!). Two imports garnered much attention: Enemy Zero and Panzer Dragoon Saga (Azél). Enemy Zero should be a hot seller, while Panzer Saga, at 50%, looked beautiful and complex.

The RPG-based third game in the Panzer series had excellent free-roaming 3D towns and gorgeous turn-based Dragoon battles. Naturally the two Sonic games, Sonic Jam, and Sonic R, were extremely hot items at the show. Besides offering some of the best gameplay of any of the games at E3, both titles showcase fantastic



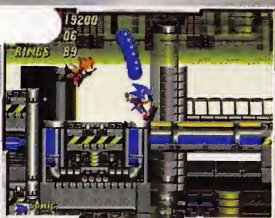
Sonic R



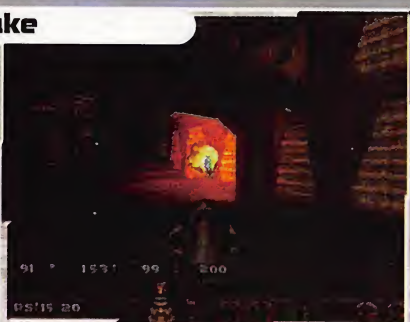
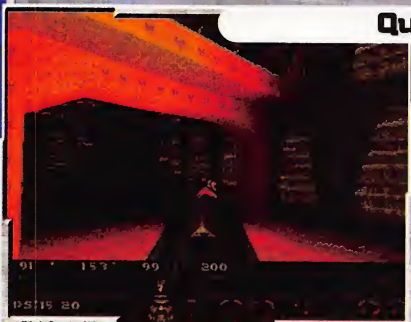
Panzer Saga



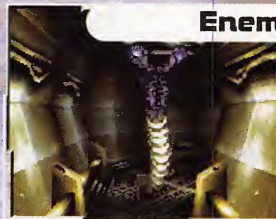
Sonic Jam



Quake



Enemy Zero



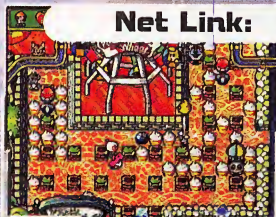
Touring Car



Net Link: Daytona CCE



Net Link: Bomberman



Lost World



Last Bronx

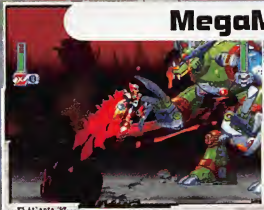


Duke Nukem

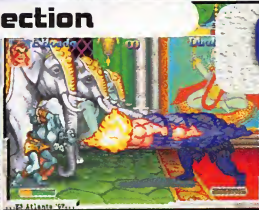


3D engines, especially Sonic R's amazing racing environments. And while the running demo was completely pre-set (the enemies were always running the same race), it was a perfect chance to see the incredible water reflections, beautiful light-sourcing, and unbelievable frame-rates of Travelers Tales' new engine. Rounding out the quality games were Lost World and Saturn Bomberman and Daytona CCE, a couple of well-needed NetLink titles coming this fall.

MegaMan X4



SF Collection



Capcom

the likes of MegaMan X4, Resident Evil and SF Collection are some of the brightest stars in the Saturn constellation. MMX4 especially excites GF's Sega faction as for the first time Capcom has combined the rendered with the hand-drawn for a shiny new look while the game plays as good or better than any other MM before it. SF Collection of course is a godsend as is Resident Evil, even if it is missing a few polys. As for Marvel Super Heroes, it toasts the PS version. Don't you dare miss even one Capcom SS game this year.

Capcom deserves respect from all SS owners for coming through with some extremely high quality software. Games

Marvel Super Heroes



Resident Evil



Fox Interactive



By far the best looking SS 3D adventure game ever devised, save maybe Sonic R, Croc defies the hardware with sparkling visuals and near PS quality textures. It's the only game from FOX but it's a great one.

Croc

MK Trilogy



One lonely Saturn product comes to us from Midway:

Midway

MK Trilogy. For the full report on this, the last Midway SS game check out the review on page 68.

Dead or Alive



A big, beautiful, bouncy, high-res 60 fps translation of Tecmo's hot Model 2 fighter Dead or Alive is coming to the Saturn. It looks good...real good! Based on the VF2 engine, with sweet



(like candy) parallax backdrops, great voice, and silky-smooth animation (including ultra-bouncy boobs), Dead or Alive is a fantastic translation.

Tecmo





GAMEFAN E3 SPORTS

Acclaim Football for the Nintendo 64 is finally here, and we have Acclaim to thank for it! The sneak peak of *Quarterback Club '98* was exciting, and gives us a glimpse at just how far football games have come. The polygon players are sensational, and it's got the gameplay to match. Also from Acclaim, *NHL Breakaway '97* is getting a lot of hype, and from what we've seen so far, it's deserving. The level of AI and the number of options available are unprecedented.

MAJOR LEAGUE SOCCER • PS



Looks cool, huh? **BMG**

It's all about 5 Jack Nicklaus signature courses in this title. *Accolade* takes its critically acclaimed PC title to the PlayStation, and looks to climb atop the leaderboard.

Accolade



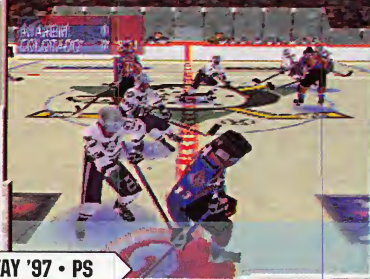
JACK NICKLAUS GOLF • PS



QUARTERBACK CLUB '98 • N64



NHL BREAKAWAY '97 • PS



Electronic Arts

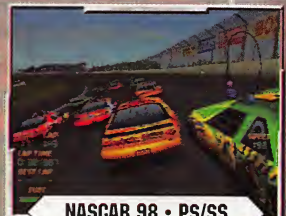
A visit to EA was like a virtual frat party: women, drinks and Madden. EA took a bold stand in sticking to a sprite-based game in *Madden 98*. Adhering to the old saying "If it ain't broken, don't fix it," EA simply heightened defensive AI, increased speed of play, and increased number of animations. First glimpses of *Live 98* proved intriguing as they addressed the problems of slow gameplay, and sub-par graphics of 97. *NHL 98* and *FIFA 98* look stronger than ever, and *NCAA Football 98* as well as first-timer *NASCAR 98* were impressive.



NBA LIVE 98 • PS/SS



NCAA FOOTBALL 98 • PS



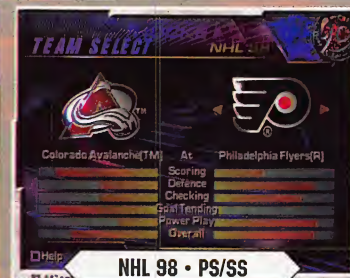
NASCAR 98 • PS/SS



MADDEN 98 • PS/SS



FIFA 98 • PS/SS

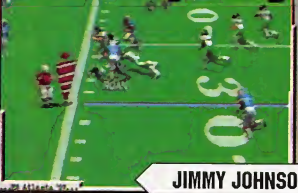


NHL 98 • PS/SS



PGA TOUR 98 • PS/SS

Interplay



JIMMY JOHNSON FOOTBALL • PS



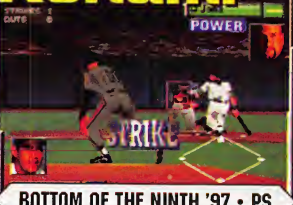
POWERBOAT RACING • PS

Brace yourself for the return of *Jimmy Johnson Football*! Some have already been saying that this is the best looking football game around—you won't mistake it when you see its signature rainbow-arched passes. Hit the water and traverse the Amazon River to the shores of Japan as VR's *PowerBoat Racing* puts things into full throttle.



VR HOCKEY '97 • PS

Konami



BOTTOM OF THE NINTH '97 • PS



IN THE ZONE '98 • PS

Bottom of the 9th's improved texture-mapped graphics, 9 polygon body types, and real-time play-by-play brings in the added realism that enthusiasts desire. Choose also from 5 different playing modes, including Training. *In the Zone '98* probably won't ever please the sim-perfectionists, but for all of us fans of the previous versions, it's only looking better, hey and... more dunks! Whether the bobsled and luge are your favorite Winter Olympic events, or skating or snowboarding, you'll have these and many others to practice and play in *Nagano Winter Olympics*.



NAGANO WINTER OLYMPICS • PS

Midway



WAYNE GRETZKY'S 3D HOCKEY '98 • N64

The Great One made an appearance at E3 to ring in the new season with a new hockey title. *Gretzky '98* will give you all of the action you yearn for as well as 3-on-3, 4-on-4 or 5-on-5 action!



Hurray for hoops! On the hoops scene, Midway provides a sim companion to their heralded *NBA Hangtime*. This 5-on-5 action carries all of the traditional options and features, with a few new ones like side and back movement, non-ball handler modes, boxing out moves and more.



NBA HARDWOOD HEROES • PS



KEN GRIFFEY BASEBALL • N64



Nintendo

This exclusive N64 game may become the most realistic, technologically advanced game available. Think about over 35,000 frames of animation in this 64-bit title. You'll want to explore Nintendo's "Reality System,"

a unique AI program that allows the user an infinite number of super, on-the-fly actions. Complete '97 rosters, Home Run Derby, and all 30 MLB 3D stadiums.



POWER SOCCER 2 • PS



Psygnosis

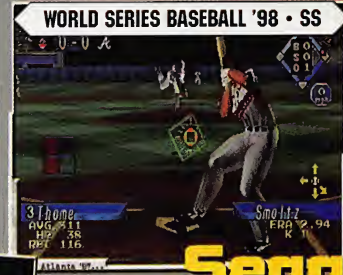
Although these shots are early, rumors are rumbling throughout the soccer world that this may be one to watch for. Psygnosis has developed a very solid reputation with their quality games, and their knowledge of soccer is second to none.



WORLD WIDE SOCCER '98 • SS



NHL ALL-STAR HOCKEY '98 • SS



WORLD SERIES BASEBALL '98 • SS

Making a resurgence onto the sports scene, Sega hits one deep with their acclaimed *World Series Baseball '98*. All of the qualities that made *WSB* a superior franchise are intact, but with better graphics and gameplay than ever before. *NBA Action '98* looks like it will be the best hoops game on the Saturn, with Create Players, Full Rosters, Signature Moves and Player Ratings. Don't forget Sega's other Fall releases: *NHL All-Star Hockey '98* and *World Wide Soccer '98*.



NBA ACTION '98 • SS



Sega



NHL FACEOFF '98 • PS



NFL GAMEDAY '98 • PS



Sony's sports line-up was the pride of the show with *GameDay '98* as the jewel of the crown. Everyone was surprised to see that Sony had not only gone polygonal, but that the transition from last year's sprite version was silky smooth, and that most importantly, the AI was as perky as ever. Speaking of polygons, *MLB '98* made the jump as well, and the fluidity was great. Video footage on every MLB and MLBPA player was accumulated by Sony in order to render each player's signature stance and pitching delivery. The players will even be scaled to size, so the Big Unit will actually stand 6'10"! It looks like Sony not only has the best playing games, but some of the best looking as well: *NHL Face-Off '98*, *CART World Series*, *NFL GameBreaker '98*, and *NBA Live '98*.

Sony



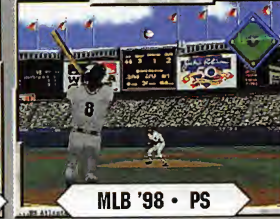
COOLBOARDERS 2 • PS



NCAA GAMEBREAKER • PS



MLB '98 • PS



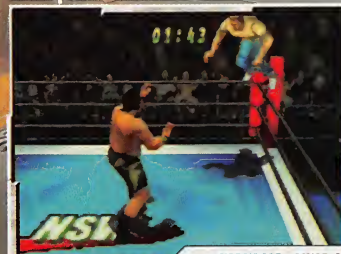
CART WORLD SERIES • PS

Wrestling fans, do not dismay. For all of you that gave *WCW vs. The World* a #1 title, you'll be happy to know that the saga continues on the N64 system (*WCW vs. NWO World Tour*) with graphics and gameplay better than ever. For those of you that need a little Nitro action, you'll soon have *WCW Nitro* for the PlayStation. This game is the real deal, complete with motion captured wrestlers; a spectacular sim.

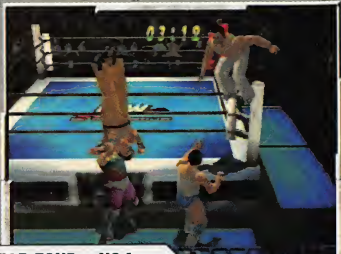
T•HQ

We'll see if they've built upon last year's success, with the implementation of enhanced AI and more accurate gameplay.

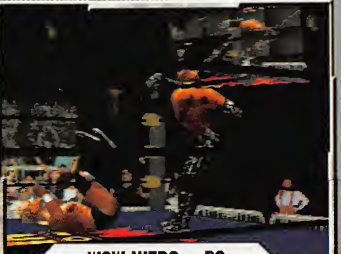
Virgin



WCW VS. NWO WORLD TOUR • N64



WCW NITRO • PS



NHL POWERPLAY '98 • PS

GameFan's Editors pick the best of the 1997 Electronic Entertainment Expo



After taking over a week to process all the data squeezed into the tiny little space in our brains not dedicated to gameplay, we've come up with this semi-intelligent appraisal based on games that, for the most part, are less than half done. As for Glitch, well, we think it may be that hole in his head...



Best of the Show

1. Wild 9's
2. Crash 2
3. Tomb Raider 2
4. Gex 2
5. Klonoa
6. Mystical Ninja 64
7. Medieval
8. Banjo-Kazooie
9. GoldenEye
10. Croc

E. Storm

Editor-in-Chief and general troublemaker

Top 5 on Video

1. Metal Gear Solid
2. Yoshi's Island 64
3. F-Zero 64
4. Zelda 64
5. Mischief Makers



Best of the Show

1. Tomb Raider 2
2. GoldenEye
3. Street Fighter EX
4. Quake
5. Klonoa
6. Rapid Racers
7. N. Creatures
8. Crash 2
9. V-Rally
10. Beastorizer

Chief H.

Knightmare's worst nightmare...

Top 5 on Video

1. Metal Gear Solid
2. Castlevania 64
3. Yoshi's Island
4. Zelda 64
5. F-Zero



Best of the Show

1. Sonic 'R'
2. Crash 2
3. Panzer Saga
4. Klonoa
5. Beastorizer
6. Last Bronx
7. Banjo-Kazooie
8. Sonic Jam
9. One
10. Rapid Racers

Glitch

The yuk-yuk Canuck wit' half a brain

Top 5 on Video

1. Metal Gear Solid
2. Zelda 64
3. F-Zero 64
4. Dead or Alive
5. Hybrid Heaven



Best of the Show

1. Final Fantasy VII
2. Tomb Raider 2
3. Crash 2
4. Wild 9's
5. Gex 2
6. Batman & Robin
7. Quake
8. GoldenEye
9. Beastorizer
10. V-Rally

Orion

Anthropomorphic vestibule-dweller

Top 5 on Video

1. Metal Gear Solid
2. Zelda 64
3. Yoshi's Island 64
4. Hybrid Heaven
5. F-Zero 64



Welcome to
the next,
next
generation.
Don't forget
to pack the
diapers



The most spectacular game being exhibited behind closed doors at E3 was Shiny's latest foray into the world of PC gaming: *Messiah*. *Messiah* is currently at a very early stage of development, but already it's apparent that, with their new 3D technology, Shiny is going to raise the stakes in domestic graphics once again, while at the same time delivering a truly unique game....

These are actual game environments... Scary huh?



Since the dawn of time it has been foretold that the end of the world will come with the breaking of the seven seals of the apocalypse. The seven seals are hidden, safeguarded until the Day of Reckoning when the forces of Heaven and Hell will be unleashed on the planet. However, the powers of Hell have secretly sent an emissary to Earth to begin the final battle prematurely. By starting the apocalypse ahead of time, they hope to sway the balance of power in their favor and win the battle before Heaven can react. Well, nobody said the Devil played fair. Fortunately, Heaven has found out about Lucifer's little scheme and has raised all its might on Earth to create a warrior of their own, a vessel for the Holy Light of God. His name is (dramatic pause) Bob. Bob must locate and protect the seven seals of the apocalypse, then confront and destroy the first foot soldier of Hell. Should he fail, Armageddon may come a little earlier than expected.



This uh, lady, one of many characters Bob must enter and use, appears as you see here within the game. When she stretches and contorts, so does her skin and clothes, far beyond model 3 (or anything else you've seen for that matter).

Regular readers may remember our interview with Dave Perry a few months ago where he unveiled the graphics engine Shiny would be using for *Messiah*. Michael 'Sax' Persson is the sole programmer responsible, and when you see the game in motion, you'll realize just how talented this guy is. Let me put it this way: most videogame characters are made up of 100s of polygons. The characters in *Messiah* are made up of anything from 60,000 to 130,000 polygons!!! How is this possible? Well, the engine only calculates the number of polygons that are visible to the player (camera), and doesn't calculate the ones that are out of sight. Once a character is designed it is 'boned' to add the motion capture data and then implemented into the game world. The results are breathtaking. You think these shots look good? Just wait till you see them in motion! But this is a high-end PC game we're talking about here, and there's little chance of it appearing on any contemporary console. So why should you be interested? Simple. Because this tessellation technology will find its way onto one of the new wave of next-generation consoles. DP has already seen the new Sega hardware and made it quite clear that it is a formidable leap in technology, smashing what's currently available. Shiny is looking to the future, and who are we to get left behind...

GAMEFAN

SPORTS



JOE KIDD

KIDD'S CORNER

5 RINGS, VIDEO GAMES and an Ear Lobe

In a day and age where sports figures are making unprecedented salaries (millions upon millions) just to go out and do their job, they have the audacity to have an attitude about being on a "losing team." Guys complain that they want to win, but don't seem to realize that that is the very reason they were chosen for that team, and why the franchise invested \$10 million a year in them to do it. Just like the wind, talent comes and talent goes, as athletes pursue bigger dollars and better endorsements. The vicious cycle continues, as weak teams get weaker, while the strong get stronger.

What I want to know is: Why are these athletes in the

game anyway? What happened to the spirit of competition, and don't they know money is "the root of all evil?" I miss the days of Magic and Bird, where guys played for the love of the sport, not the love of the almighty dollar and themselves. It's nice to see a team like the Bulls, a team that wants to stay together, and who play to win. How heroic was it to see MJ in the playoffs, in obvious discomfort from illness, brave it out, pour in 29 points and hit the game-winning basket. At that moment, I knew Jordan was worth every bit of that \$30 million salary. Who else can justify the salaries they earn? Certainly nobody is worth it until they have proven themselves, and those names are far and few between. How can you give a 17-year-old out of high school a \$12 million shoe contract when he hasn't played a single game yet? Speaking of not earning their salary...

Last night I may have witnessed the most desperate, low-class, disgusting excuse for a professional athlete ever. Mike "Hannibal Lecter" Tyson lost all ability to control his

emotions, and in return lost all ability to gain any respect in a society that wanted to believe in him, and give him a second chance in life. But because he has a "family to support" (because obviously he doesn't have much money), he resorted to biting another man's ear, shaking his head like a dog and tearing off the flesh, only to spit the lobe onto the canvas... This ain't the WWF, folks, this is real life, where \$30 million is the purse, and \$5,000 is what it costs to be present. As disgusted as I am with Mike, how can you blame him? Not because he was getting head-butted, but because they plucked this kid out of the inner-city, where he bit off more than just ear chunks on a daily basis. Give the guy millions of dollars, and have Don King as your mentor and you have a serious butt-kicking head case. Don King is the man I blame, the man who evades responsibility like the plague, and it has transcended to everyone he does business with. Not only should Tyson be banned from boxing, but King should too. Even though we deal with a world that is more virtual by the day, we have to recognize the things in life that are real, and that have real impact.

Now how about a little video game news? Here's what to look forward to in the upcoming months:

"JOE" VIEWPOINTS "STRAP"

Now I know why they call it *PowerPlay*, it's because there's seemingly penalties every other second. The one immediate impression I walked away with, was that there was never any solid, uninterrupted length of playtime. Whether it was hooking, tripping or icing I was constantly facing off, and never able to get into the flow of the game. Aside from that, the controls take some getting used to, but the passing is precise.

G C P M O 70
8 6 7 6 7



NHL PowerPlay '98
Virgin Interactive

NHL PowerPlay '98. The first hockey game out this year. I'll tell you right away that it's worth playing. In fact, I'm a few games into a season, and already looking forward to the play-offs. The graphics are good enough to keep me involved, but most importantly all the options are here. I can create players, trade, pretty much configure everything, AND I can play roster tournaments with some of the hottest rosters around (Team Canada and USA, especially). The control needs to be a little more responsive, but great player moves like backwards skating and precise drop-passing make up for it.

G C P M O 80
7 7 8 7 7

Al? Never heard of it. Playbooks? Don't think so. Realism? Not a chance. Any fun? You bet. This is a full-court sprint of slammin' and jammin'. The Create Player mode is what really makes this game fun. Watch your guy grow in attributes along the season, and have fun doing it. The only fault with this game is that they could bring in a lot more "fun features" on the court, i.e. a 10 point shot. Quarters are too short too, but overall, entertaining fun.

G C P M O 79
7 8 8 7 9



NBA Hangtime
Midway

Uh oh, I've finally reached my limit... years of big heads, "He's on fire!" and those wacky flamin' dunks... look, NO MORE JAM GAMES, O.K.?! Yeah sure, they look prettier each time, a few minor gameplay elements are dropped in, and several players abound. We've been digging the *Jam* "formula" for years, but, just like the *MK* series (and this year's *MK Trilogy*), this could be the last time I bother. *NBA Hangtime* looks very good; crisp graphics, perfect scrolling courts, decent animation, I'll give it that. The create player options are cool, and hey, the control is spot-on. If you're still happy with the formula, *Jam* on with *Hangtime*.

G C P M O 79
8 8 8 6 3

Football

- Madden '98
- GameDay '98
- Quarterback Club '98
- VR's Jimmy Johnson Football
- Legends Football '98
- NCAA Football '98
- NCAA GameBreaker '98

Hockey

- NHL PowerPlay '98
- NHL Face-Off '98
- NHL Breakaway '98
- NHL '98
- Gretzky's 3D Hockey
- NHL All-Star Hockey '98
- VR Hockey

Baseball

- MLB '98
- Bottom of the 9th
- World Series Baseball '98

Basketball

- In the Zone 2
- NBA Live '98
- Shootout '98
- NBA Action '98
- NBA Hardwood Heroes
- NBA Jam '98

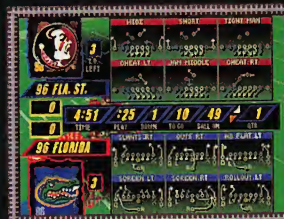
It's just about time to gear up for a little college football folks, and EA's *NCAA Football 98* is right on time for the kick-off. When firing up the alpha version EA sent me, I really didn't expect the game to be any different than Madden with college uniforms. But walking away from my initial test run, I was impressed to find enough differences, that I was hardly drawing any Madden comparisons at all. Yeah, maybe at first glance there are similarities, but when you really start to get into the game, you notice the subtle differences in the AI, how the CPU defense tends to make "rookie maneuvers", over-pursuing and diving at you on a little change in direction -- things that you see a lot of in college, but not so much at the pro level. Another example, is when you are going for it on fourth down, the defense isn't always automatically set up for a play, but rather has to scramble to call an audible from their Punt formation. A lot of these defensive "errors", made the game a whole lot more offensive oriented, just like actual college ball, where 72-0 scores and 200+ yard rushing days are common, weekly occurrences.

The thing that really makes college football special is the excitement and youthful exuberance. This is when the game is still pure, and they are playing because they love the game and want to win, not because they are trying to increase their value for next year's free agency status. NCAA brings back the head butts and the dog piles in the endzone, and they aren't penalized for celebrating (taunting). The clash of the symbols, and the beat of the drums go off as your team marches down the field and crosses that line. Banners for the home team are strewn around the stadium further enhancing the college football experience.

A nice touch to the game are the players' updated game statistics after each play. Many of the pro sports games don't offer this option, so for a college one it's pretty impressive -- you gotta make sure your star in the backfield is getting is 30 carries a game, and maintaining that 7 yard average, meanwhile your inside linebacker racks up tackles. Running up the middle is an undeniable option, since the holes are wide open for major yardage, especially when hitting the speed burst button. The no huddle offense is prominent in this game and I found it to be extremely effective.

All of the college rules are intact, so remember, there's no getting up once your knee hits the ground. We've all been there when we're scrambling in the backfield and we accidentally push the wrong button, our QB dives on the ground, but is able to get back up only to complete the long ball... well that's not how it works in the college ranks. Another exclusive to college football... Overtime. For those of you lucky enough to witness an overtime in college football last year, it proved to be one of the most exhilarating moments in sports. The rules have changed where each team gets a shot at the endzone, much in the way of a Shootout, and basically whoever capitalizes on their opportunity is the one who takes the game. I don't know how to explain it, but it is such a climactic build up that the entire stadium is in an uproar, and *NCAA Football 98* has captured it; although no cheering whatsoever from the visiting fans.

The graphics and load time may not be all that I'm looking for at this stage, but as early of a version as this is, I had a great time with this one, finding many new things each time I played. Loved the huddling, loved the QB Option with the lateral, loved being able to play out of conference anytime I chose, and loved all of the Practice, Dynasty, Great Game modes available. Looking forward to a great finished product.



DEVELOPER - TIBURON
 PUBLISHER - EA
 FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-8
 DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE
 AVAILABLE - AUGUST



JOE KIDD
 Go Bears!
 Stanford sucks!

NASCAR 98

Well I've had an opportunity to test drive the new *NASCAR 98* and I think EA may be on to something here. When EA makes a sports game, like I've said a thousand times, you know you're gonna get some quality sim-action. They don't have exotic scenery along their tracks, with whacky little dune-buggies slamming into each other, racing to the latest techno sound track. Instead, you're going to go through what Terry Labonte goes through, see what Jeff Gordon sees, and feel what Dale Earnhardt feels. All of these NASCAR drivers and more have actively participated in the game to make it what it is.

What is NASCAR? How about tireless attention to detail where you can actually adjust physics and AI. Each of the settings are adjustable by percentages, everything from Drafting Effects to Car Balance. For the first time, you can now race the entire race just like they do on the circuit, for instance to finish the Primestar 500 in Atlanta, Georgia, you must complete 238 laps! You guys wanted it, and EA delivered. Personally, I don't see the fascination in racing 238 laps around an oval track... I mean, I'm not gonna win any money, so where's the incentive? Well, if I were a die-hard NASCAR fan, I would want the real thing -- so there it is. Oddly enough, I did find interesting the way the race progressed, and how you're forced to manipulate pitstops and implement drafting at key moments in the race.

The interaction between you and the rest of the field is very tense.



ten actual speedways!



Each of the other drivers takes on the characteristics of their real life counterparts, and they even start to learn your particular driving style and make adjustments! That's some scary AI there. Here in *NASCAR*, your opponents actually try to anticipate the direction you'll take while trying to pass them, and consequently shift positions to try and block you. If you get in a wreck and others are following you, they're gonna wreck too, they don't automatically steer around you; they do if they have enough room, but they don't merely slip by through cyber-zone. In a lot of racing games, if you make an error early, you'll never see another opponent for the rest of the race, but in *NASCAR*, you can usually get back in to it, but you'll be rubbing and bumping all of the way to the checkered flag -- it's a battle all the way.

All of the sound effects were recorded at Atlanta Motor Speedway and Darlington International, so of course the sound is top-notch; albeit monotonous after lap 50. As good as the sound is, there just isn't enough fluctuation in tones and sounds to really authenticate the aural experience. The play by play is done by the voice of NASCAR, Bob Jenkins, as he gives his synopsis at season's opening, and before each race throughout the season. Also for your assistance, is a brief summary about each driver and their car; their strengths and their weaknesses. You'll need to know what your characteristics are, because it's a 17 race season versus 23 other drivers, each with unique racing qualities. Strap yourself in, because the green flag is out and ready for next month's review! JK



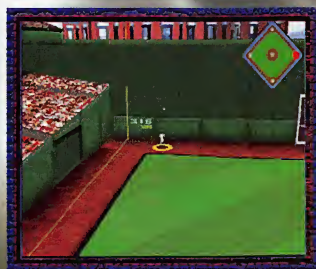
 	DEVELOPER - STORM FRONT	# OF PLAYERS - 1-2	 JOE KIDD HEY... ONLY 211 MORE LAPS TO GO!
	PUBLISHER - EA	DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE	
	FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - FALL	

Major League Baseball '98

MLB

Major League Statistics

Create A Player!



Starting Lineup

C	9	Brady Anderson	AVG	.297	2B	37
2B	12	Roberto Alomar	AB	579	3B	5
RF	24	Eric Davis	HITS	172	HR	50
1B	23	Rafael Palmeiro	RBI	110	SO	106
3B	8	Cal Ripken, Jr.	RUNS	117	BATS	1
LF	17	B.J. Surhoff				
C	22	Chris Nolas				
DW	55	Pete Incaviglia				
SS	14	Mike Berntz				
P	33	Mike Mussina				

CHOOSE
 BATTING ORDER
 POSITION
 PLAYER
 DONE

Create Player

FIRST: FRANK LAST: PROBATION SEX: Male FACE: Good HEIGHT: Med BUILD: Med	POSITION: Right Field JERSEY #: 44 THROW: Right BAT: Right	POWER: High AVG: High HIT LEFT: Low HIT CENTER: High SPEED: High ARM: High FIELDING: High JUMPING: High
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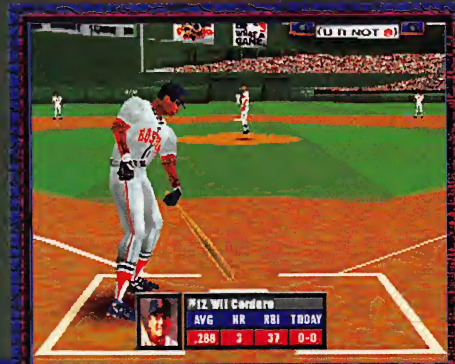
Most of the baseball franchises have submitted this year's entries, but one of the last big names yet to be seen is *MLB '98*. Sony has shown it's ability to put out a solid consistent line of sports on the PlayStation, and *MLB* looks as if it will be just another perfect fit to this impressive puzzle.

One of the first things you'll notice when you step onto the playing field, are the amazing similarities this game has to *Triple Play '98*. Not only are the player graphics very similar, but the game interface has that same, clean, chart look that lends further strength to the comparisons. But once you start to play, you really notice quite a difference between the two from there on out. In *MLB*, the batting is much easier, in that it's very simple to put the bat on the ball; in fact, you could probably make contact with every single pitch with enough practice. However, the difficulty seems to be in reaching base; as many times as you're making contact, it seemed as if easy outs were the inevitable result. On the flipside, you have *MLB's* counterpart *Triple Play '98*, where batting has difficulty making contact, however, when you do, the ball is not so quickly disposed into 1-2-3 innings. Somehow, there seems to be a need for more of a balance. On another batting related note -- you'll be happy to know there are amusing signature stances and swings, some will make you laugh.

I have to keep reminding myself that this is only a preview, it's 80% along the way, but there's a lot that can happen in the remaining 20. Fielding grabbed everyone's attention as well because of a couple simple features. The first feature that really enhances your ability to follow the flight path of the ball, is the way the ball marker is set up. When you're fielding fly balls, you'll see a large tennis ball-size shadow in the outfield (or wherever else the ball may be headed), gradually as the ball descends, the shadow gets smaller and smaller making the actual feat more precise. The other noteworthy point in the fielding is the diving/jumping feature. With the X button you can choose to jump straight up, dive to the left, dive to the right, or else straight ahead for the ball. I thought it was great to have all these functions available to you, all stemming from one button; it gave me a little reassurance knowing

I only had one button to think about. I guess my only qualm with the fielding is that the players seem to run a lot faster than real life, making it hard to lay one in the gap. But you gotta love how the fielders take little steps before they ground the ball in order to slow down; that's the kind of attention to detail that will keep you coming back for more.

Overall, *MLB* seems as if it's a game that's very easy to pick up. The ability to ease into this game pushes you past any potential frustration barriers that new games sometimes promote, and quite readily catches and holds your attention from the get go. Little things like runners caught in the middle of a run-down not losing any speed after changing directions, will inevitably be included in the 20% of the tweaking that remains. Man... I feel like I've already had a meal when it was only an appetizer! **JK**



GAMEFAN SPORTS

PREVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - SONY

PUBLISHER - SONY

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - JULY '97

JOE KIDD
Bring on the main course!

NHL POWERPLAY '98



O h, O.K. Kidd, I see how it is...hockey, huh? Bring the Cannuck back for a sports article just 'cause it's a hockey game, eh? I'm familiar with the stereotype: Way up in the Great North, in our frigin' Igloos, kickin' back with a Moosehead, just watchin' the game... 'cause hey, it's snowing outside, you know, it's *always* snowing in Canada, eh?! Uh...thanks Joe, I'd love to. After-all, *NHL Powerplay '98* is being developed by a team of hockey nuts from Canada, up in a high-tech igloo called Radical Entertainment. So, like, let's see if Virgin's newest hockey game is gonna take-off, eh? Doh...

I'll give Virgin (and Radical) props for their first *NHL Powerplay* game; it was solid, easy on the eyes, and offered the perfect collection of options, as per the NHL license. And although the original was clearly superior on the Saturn, it seems as though Virgin is only interested in a PS version of '98...arrgh! *Powerplay* is a Saturn classic in my book! Anyway, this year's installment promises to be the greatest ever, as Virgin has seen fit to expand the gameplay to include world tournament modes. Any hockey fan will tell you that NHL franchises and players should be enough, but with the approach of the Winter '98 Olympics, it seems the World Tourney option might be a smart move. Especially if you're cheering for Team Canada, heh, we've got some good players... a few guys by the name of Lindros, Lemieux, Gretzky, Roy... maybe you've heard of 'em? Also tagging along for the World ride are new rink textures, banners, and naturally, all-new rosters, logos, and tournament modes. So if the NHL play-off debacle wasn't enough for ya (how did Colorado let themselves get so smashed? Pat, baby, what's with the shut-out losses? The 'Lanche (my Nordiques!) are better than that! Forseberg, hometown buddy, what happened?!?! And Philly...Hextall was BEAT, Leclair and Lindros were dead, and they needed work out of Hawerchuk and Otto. I'll tell you what it is: Detroit has the freakin' Red Army! And Scotty's the wonderful Wizard of Ov! Federov, Kozlov, Konstantinov, Larionov, Fetisov...because, because, because...well, I guess Stevie Y. and Vernon didn't hurt matters either), how 'bout the new game season, with all the create player, trade, and roster fixin' options you'll ever need.

Aesthetically speaking, Radical's done a fine job updating the 3D engine for '98. Everything's polygonal, the frame rate is high (needs to be higher though, hint, hint), and the presentation is convincing, with sweet animation and well-implemented effects like rink reflections. The sound is excellent; rowdy hockey crowds should sound this good at every game, but I'd like to hear it even louder! The only rough spot so far, and this is probably just preview stuff, is the control. There's actually loads to do, you know, backwards skating, wristers, slaps, drop shots, drop passes, but the thumb-to-pad-to-screen response is a little delayed; hockey's gotta' be fast! Sure, it has to feel like you're on ice, but it has to play like you're a professional hockey player!

O.K., I'm all out of space, so enjoy the shots and be sure to check back with me for the next preview... I'll be the GF Sports go-to man for hockey this year. **G**



GAMEFAN
SPORTS

R
REVIEW



DEVELOPER - RADICAL

PUBLISHER - VIRGIN

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-8

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - FALL



GLITCH
Take-off eh!

NBA HANGTIME



Well we are Mid-Way through the year, and what shows up on our doorstep? None other than the infamous *Hangtime!* It's amazing how many people scoff at this game, because of the big heads, the funky

music, and the overall lack of "sim qualities", but in the end, many of these same critics are whooping it up in a fast paced game of 2 on 2. No it's not like "real" basketball, but at the same time, it never claimed to be. Realism was never the intention, but rather some good, solid fun with some of the NBA's top stars. Who can resist trying to predict and manipulate the best 2-man combo in the NBA?

"I'm goin' with Hardaway and Mourning, who you goin' with?"
 "I don't know, either Kemp and Payton or Webber and Howard."
 The combinations are endless, as you not only have your dynamic duo, but a 3-man bench as well. Every NBA team is in here, and only the usual suspects (Jordan, Barkley and Shaq) are absent. The basic incentive behind this game is really simple - raw bragging rights, that's it! And you know us meathead sportsfans, we can play the same game for hours, even though the only thing that's changed is a new 4 quarters, a new team, and a new opponent... other than that... it's just back and forth, back and forth. Ok, so I'm simple, better for me.

But in the off chance that I might find the 8th consecutive hour of B'n'F action a little monotonous, there's actually a lot more to the game than meets the eye. To the fortunate gamer that can actually find and keep track of his/her memory card, the gates to the game within are flung open. Why is the memory card so pertinent? It's the Create Player mode that is so unique, and the option that truly brings this game to another level of genuine fun and wackiness.

Within the Create Player mode, you aren't just creating a Center, Forward or Guard... no, no, no. Instead, you can create goat boys, fat ladies, old men with pointie hats, green martians, horned gorillas and more. (Of course if you still want to hang on to a shred of realism, you can still create "normal" looking players, modeled after actual players in the game.) Feel free to adjust the attributes, select a couple of special moves, pick out a new uni, and you're playin' hoops Hangtime style. Now I'm not caught up in this feature simply because I can morph out funny looking guys in shorts and tank tops. The aspect that really solidifies the fun factor for me is that you have an opportunity to improve your attributes over the season should you reach certain benchmarks. Of course the more games you win, the better your player gets; only in the areas in which you designate. You can even obtain hidden attributes! In essence, your player seems more like a real, living and breathing player in that it actually seems to grow over time! I know it's just a game, but just like experience points in RPGs and reaching new levels, there's that inherent sense of satisfaction achieved by reaching the next step. Just look at these darn Tamagotchis! There just an irritating little keychain decoration when you think about it, but something within us won't let the thing die!

Anyway, getting back on the subject of *Hangtime*, the stats are detailed and fun to track. 10 blocks a game by John Stockton is not an outrage in Midway interpretation of basketball, but it's all cool. My one beef with this game is with substitutions. Here you are with a 5 man team, and you can only make one substitution, that one being at half-time. Where's the logic? Why have a 3-man bench if you can only make one sub? I'm no mathematician, but these numbers don't pencil out. One last, cool little feature is the trivia op you get at the end of games. They don't ask antiquated questions no one will ever know, but at the same time they are questions that take a bit of hoops knowledge to answer. *Hangtime* is fun; plain and simple. I'm not looking for NBA realism when I play this game, and I didn't look for loopholes when I went to see *The Lost World*; take it for what it is.

REVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - MIDWAY

PUBLISHER - MIDWAY

FORMAT - CD

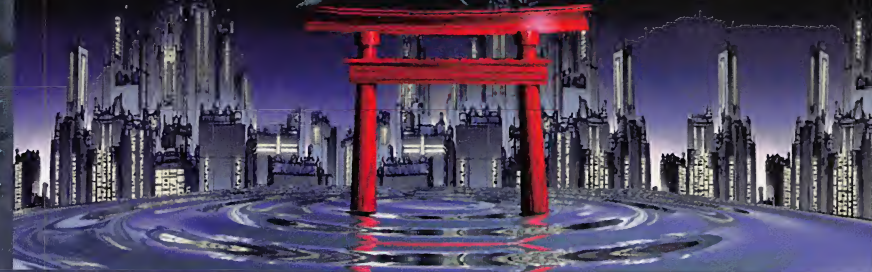
OF PLAYERS - 1-4

DIFFICULTY - EASY

AVAILABLE - JULY

JOE KIDD
Get off me... I like it!

JAPAN NOW

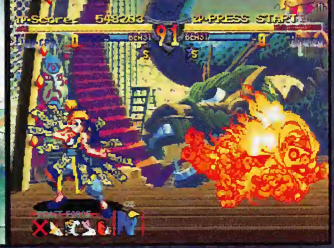
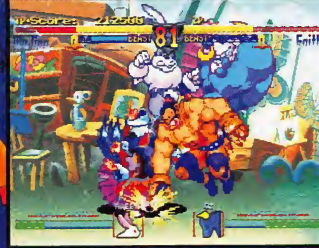
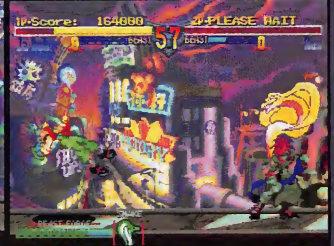
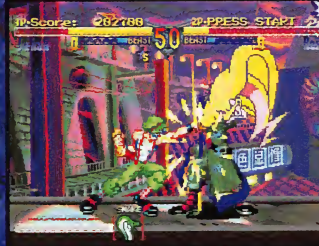


GUNDAM the BATTLE MASTER
 Where there are Japanese gamers... there are Gundams. Practically a religious movement but hardly ever worth the plastic they're pressed on, GBM is by a millennium the best Gundam fighter ever produced. Hell, it's the finest 2D robo-fighter ever produced leaving Cyberbots and even the masterful Rise of the Robots in the dust. Uh, that was a joke—Rise is a turd-burglar. Read all about GBM in the September GF.

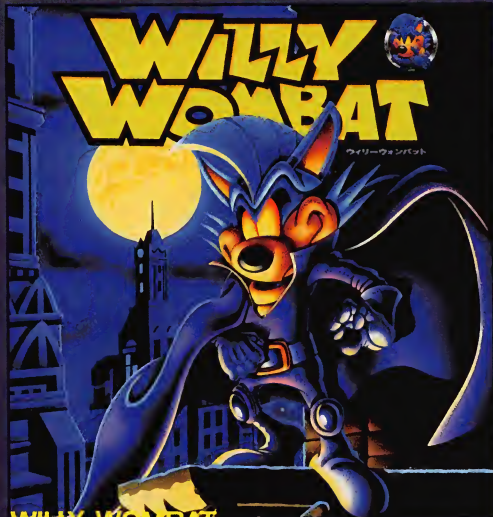
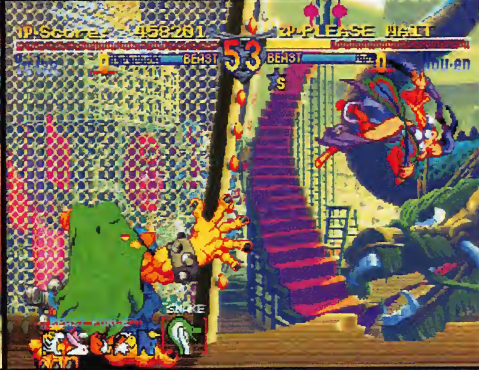
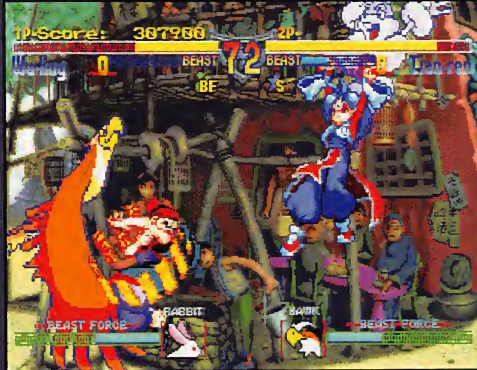
SO, YOU WANT
BIG
 CHARACTERS?



Believe it or not... SAMURAI RPG!!
 That's right! We actually have, in our possession, all three versions of Samurai RPG (PS,SS, and NG). One of the incarnations of Rox will bring you the complete story on this, one of the most anticipated RPGs ever (and one that won't be coming out over here) in the September issue.



RABBIT Yet another H-Core import, this time from EA Japan, Rabbit, sort of a cross between Darkstalkers and Samurai, just rocks. Ahem, excuse me, uh, SOA... hello... anyone there? We'll review Rabbit next month.



WILLY WOMBAT
 Rrring, ring... "Hello, SOA, may I help you? What's that? A polygonal/isometric action adventure with rotation on the fly by Westone (makers of Wonder Boy) and art by Famitsu lead artist Susumu Matsushita? No thanks." ...bzzzzzz. We'll review Willy next month as well.

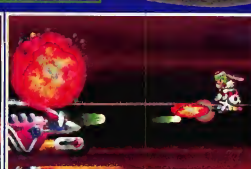


TREASURE IGNITES THE N64!



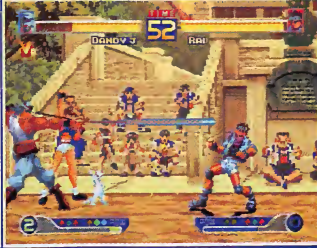
YUKE YUKE TROUBLEMAKERS

Platform fans will need CPR after diving into Treasure's latest (via Enix in Japan and the big N here). The play mechanics in *YYT* are off-the-charts hotty-hot, and the N64 (as though born to side-scroll) kicks like never before, prodded by the world's finest at Treasure. This game just seeps innovation, ingenuity and graphic power. Yuke will make its US debut later this year as *Mischief Makers*, and rightly so, as there is much text as you set out across this 60 plus level platform-action-puzzler. I'll have a Storm-sized story on *YYT* in the September issue.



When was the last time you fought a real boss?





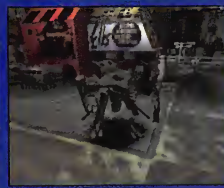
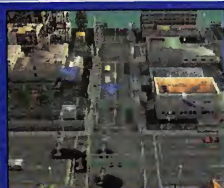
WAKU-WAKU 7

...More like Wacky Wacky 7, this fluid 55 follow up to Sunsoft's Galaxy Fight is packed with joyous animation and although pixelly, pretty hapniny zooming BGs. WW7 uses the memory cart to pack some of the most gigantic enemies on-screen ever witnessed, as well as explosive super attacks that go off like Mexican fireworks. We'll probe the innards of this fine fighter in September.



FRONT MISSION ALTERNATIVE

Front Mission Alternative marks Square's first 32-bit FM as well as their first real-time strategy game. The graphics in Alternative look phenomenal, but it remains to be seen if Square can whip up a hardcore realtime strategy engine. My guess? They can. FMA will be released this summer.



As neat as Front Mission Alternative looks, every Front Mission fan knows it's all about turn-based strategy, and that's just what FM2 (Nope, it's not FM Two, but Front Mission Second) is. Featuring the same game engine as the original, updated with gorgeous polygonal maps and 60fps battles, FM2 is for the hardcore fans that weren't pleased when Square announced a realtime FM. FM2 will be out in fall.

Saga Frontier
サガ フロンティア

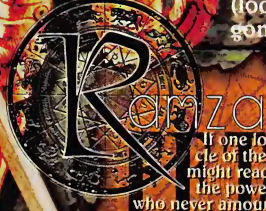
Hmm. We were all looking forward to Saga Frontier until we actually played it. No, I take that back, were still looking forward to it, just not as much. Final Fantasy VII is a tough act to follow, and Square knows it—maybe Frontier will be improved over the somewhat mediocre demo we played. We'll have the import review next month, so stop by! Frontier will be out July 11th.

Artwork copyright Sunsoft 1997, Square 1997



SQUARE'S

FINAL FANTASY TACTICS



If one looks up Ramza in a chronicle of the War of the Lions, one might read about the third son of the powerful House of Beoulve, who never amounted to much, surpassed by his older brothers. Forgotten by history, the truth is that only Ramza knew what really happened during the War, and what treachery the savior-king Dereta used to come to power.

I love Square. Nearly every game they touch is a masterpiece, unsurpassed in its category... unless you compare it to another Square game. Although I'm the first to say I appreciate Square's mindblowing, multi-million dollar productions, they can become a bit numbing after a while. They're so superproduced, so slick, so glossy, so... perfect, that at times I just want to return to the roots of it all: the essence of a great RPG. Even if Square did spend millions on Final Fantasy Tactics by buying the key members of Quest, makers of Ogre Battle and Tactics Ogre, it has the feel of the older Super Famicom RPGs that I hold close to my heart. Though bristling with modern features, like polygonal graphics so good they really do look hand drawn (look at those backgrounds! Can you believe they're polygons?) and an unbelievable CG intro, Tactics was made by a

relatively small staff, and you can feel it... each member's work can be identified. I mean, can you really look at any given screen in Final Fantasy VII and say, "Oh yes... this scene was rendered by Taro Yamada in Section 4-B of CG Department #307-A, at the Osaka office"? Of course not. But with only five or six brilliant key staff members on Tactics, each person's work stands out and can be appreciated. These developers weren't hired just because they can whip up some hot CG or what have you, they were hired because they wanted to make Final Fantasy Tactics. Though it's a stupid comparison, Final Fantasy Tactics is like a small art-house film compared to a insanely-budgeted blockbuster—they may both be excellent, but in entirely different ways. Square must be respected for still being willing to release this type of game, very different from their other PlayStation titles, let alone applying the Final Fantasy name to it.

The concept and story of Final Fantasy Tactics is brilliant—you already know the basic outcome of the story at the beginning of the game... or at least what the history books say. The antagonist, Dereta, will eventually become the Savior King of Yvalice, while the main character, Ramza, is for-

北天騎士団騎士
「士官候補生の諸君、任務である！」

剣士アルガス
「チッ。」

剣士ラムザ
「よせッ！ アルガス！」

剣士ガフガリオン
「いいか、一人残らず殺るぞッ！
生きて帰るを望まなッ！」

HP	MP	CT	Lv.	Exp	Dr.	Fr.	As
045 / 049	035 / 035	029 / 029	030				
065 / 060	045 / 045	054 / 054	030				

Lv. Exp. Sp. 043 / 047 / 010
 0x1 ダニエル
 見聞の戦士
 炎の杖 Path 76



Knight

Archer

Monk

Black Mage

Chronomancer

Negotiator

Summoner

Squall Chemist



25h

HP 024/81x
MP 040/040
CT 012/012
100/100

Enemy
HP 01 / 12 Lv.03 EXP.45
MP 053/053
CT 010/010
100/100

gotten by history, considered to be nothing more than a bit player in the vast web of intrigue and treachery that is the War of the Lions, a struggle for monarchy between the brother of the widowed Queen and the dead King's cousin. You have to wonder... how will the game end?? It can't end happily with what appears to be a villain being hailed as a hero, can it? We'll just have to wait and see.

The actual game system is virtually identical to Quest's Tactics Ogre, their last game for the Super Famicom. It's fairly straightforward—Vandal Hearts-type (though you must be reminded, Tactics Ogre came first) map-by-map strategy, with the added bonus of Final Fantasy III and V's Job System—your character's occupation can be changed at will, and build strength in certain abilities that can be kept even after changing to another job. For

instance, you can be a knight and still wield Black Magic, or be an archer that's able to use items. Unfortunately I haven't had much time to play FF Tactics—what you see here is only from the first three hours of the game or so. If all goes well, you can expect a preview of the American version soon... or perhaps even a review of the import. FFR

Dereta

Dereta Heirall is the man who would come to be known as the savior-king of all Vvalice. A commoner, and Ramza's childhood friend, he attended the illustrious Galliard Officers Academy with Ramza only at the recommendation of the Beoulves. Years later, Ramza witnesses Dereta kidnap the Princess Ovella, the event that touches off the War of the Lions.

PREVIEW



PlayStation

DEVELOPER - SQUARE

PUBLISHER - SQUARE

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - ADVANCED

AVAILABLE - NOW JAPAN



0h

Enemy
01 / 12 Lv.04 EXP.55
HP 065/065
MP 017/013
100/100

ガイスト
モック



アルマ
「ラムザ兄さん。
戻っておいでだったのね。」





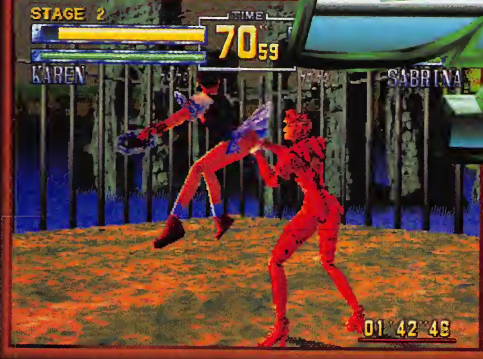
PURE INNOVATION! TWO POLYGONAL WARRIORS IN A 3D ARENA. WHAT WILL THEY THINK OF NEXT?

"Get enough triangles together and eventually a fighting game will emerge," seems to be the metaphor for Takara, who just can't get enough of a category, which for the most part doesn't want them, or need them. Toshinden had a following way back when, but since has become somewhat of a paradox, and the game you see here, D-Xthrd (pronounced D-3rd oddly), while OK by current SS standards, is nothing to write home about.

You've got your polygonal chicks and dudes, your pseudo-light source shading, your token combo system and super moves. It's all here... in a mediocre sort of way.

At a respectable 30 fps, it seems almost slow when compared to 60 framers like Tobal 2, EX and Last Bronx. However, Takara has managed to squeeze just enough pizazz into D-Xthrd to perhaps attract the 'desperately seeking anything' SS user.

While most of

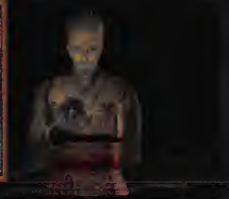


DEVELOPER - NEXTECH
 PUBLISHER - TAKARA
 FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2
 DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE
 AVAILABLE - NOT JAPAN



E. STORM
 Takara gets the characters right, but little else...



these reside in the visuals, at least they've taken up residence. The character design, a vast array (from hellish warrior to catholic school girl), is a mix only a mother could love and the environments are downright OK looking with animated goodies like running water and waves of grain. Both enclosed and open (for those chilling ring-outs) they deserve mild props.

IT'S ALL ABOUT HI-REZ MODE, LEGGY BABES AND DEMONS FROM HELL

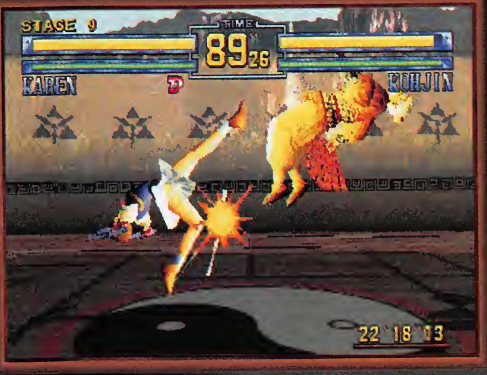
Yet another sleepy similarity to others in the category is the Training Stage. Here (now check this out, it's 100% innovation!), you can bring up a list of moves and then try them on a crash-test-dummy-like drone opponent. What will they think of next, people?

And finally, if you can't find a nail to stick in your ear, check out the gleaming D-Xhird soundtrack, a testament to volume control if ever there was one. But look at it positively, no one will ever tell you to "turn it down!" because you'll never "play it loud."

LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

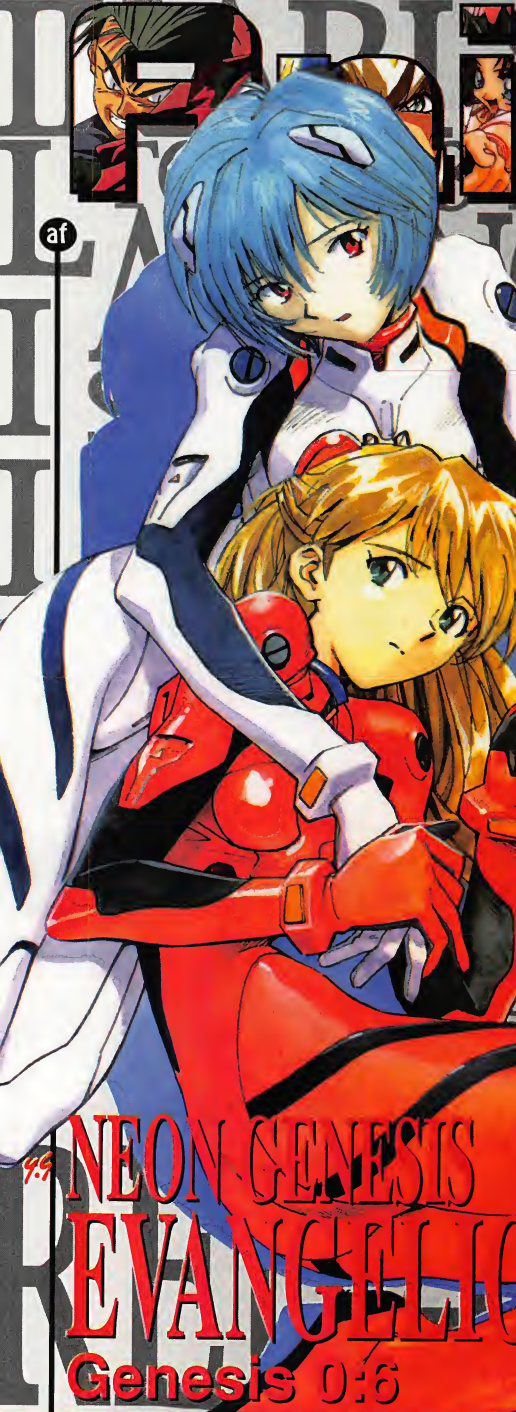
There is an alternative route for SS users smart enough to embrace all that is import. Both Rabbit and Waku Waku 7 (see page 99) are well worth purchase and Princess Crown (coming in July) looks to be a blessed event. In the polygonal arena, Last Bronx shall make your cup runneth over.

D-Xhird checks in as another "me-to" fighter. If you simply can't get enough of this tired genre you may as well have a look, otherwise my advice would be to save your money for Bronx, or if you're thirsty for hand-drawn 2D, Rabbit, Waku, or Princess Crown.





AF Review



It's a miracle! Exactly one month after Genesis 0:5, I'm holding Genesis 0:6 in my hands. After the incredibly long delay between Genesis 0:4 and 0:5, this is extremely refreshing.. let's hope the releases stay this way! In any case, Genesis 0:6, which pretty much marks the halfway point in the series, is where the random comedy generally stops and the searing drama begins to appear.

Though the stuff doesn't really start happening until Genesis 0:8 (Episode 16... just wait. It's... it's... well, you'll see) the two episodes in this volume ("In the Still Darkness/The Day Tokyo-3 Stood Still" and "The Value of a Miracle Is...") mark a smooth transition from the wackiness of the previous volume to the upcoming episodes: Not overly dramatic, like many episodes to come, which will actually leave you feeling drained, but simply solid, Angel-battling episodes, each with a twist.

In "In the Still Darkness" someone sabotages all of Tokyo-3's power supply, leaving the area (and NERV headquarters) in total darkness. As fate would have it, the next angel chooses this very moment to attack, and grueling preparations are made to launch the Evangelions manually... but where are the pilots? Even if Shinji, Rei and Asuka can make it back to headquarters with no electricity to aid them, can they defeat the Angel with less than five minutes of battery time in their Evas?

"The Value of a Miracle Is..." besides revealing some shocking truths about Misato's past, such as how she received the scar on her chest, has the Children trying to stop a bomb-like Angel from landing on Tokyo-3 and totally obliterating it. The only problem: Nobody can determine where it will touch down. The odds are only 1 in 10,000 that the Evas will be able to stop the Angel, but, as Misato says, miracles don't just happen, people have to make them happen.

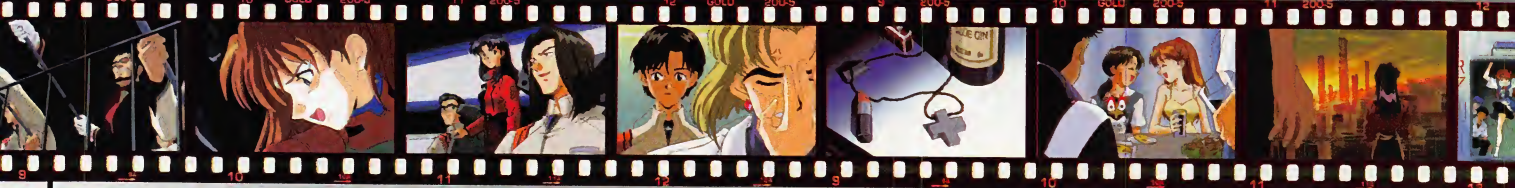
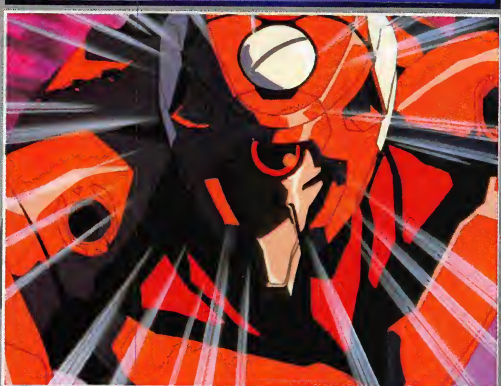
And now, as usual, some commentary on the dub. It's just as bad as it ever was. Try watching Evangelion with your eyes closed, and you'd swear you were watching a Saturday morning cartoon. In other words, they actually translated Asuka's trademark line "anta baka!" as "you dumbkopf!" If that's not a sign of a problematic dub, than what is?

AF Review

animation	F	D	C	B	A
dubbing	=====				
story	=====				
music	=====				

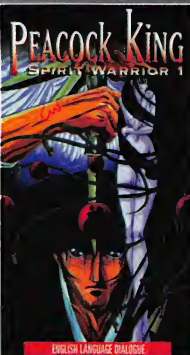
A

NEON GENESIS EVANGELION Genesis 0:6





Peacock King Spirit Warrior 1



Based on the infamous series that spawned *Spellcaster* on the Master System and later *Mystic Defender* on a young Sega Genesis, *Peacock King* revolves around Kujaku, a young mystic who, able to acquire the mystical Dragon Orb (anyone else who dares is dead meat), has the potential to reign supreme on Earth... or destroy it. Meanwhile, Siegfried von Mitgard, leader of the Neo-Nazis, needs to sacrifice the young and beautiful Tomoko to fulfill an ancient occult ritual (unearthed by Hitler's minions) and become The Regent of Darkness, supreme ruler over all that is. The struggle between good (the forces of light that come to stop Siegfried) and evil (the Neo-Nazis) with Kujaku in the middle is what makes Makoto Ogino's *Peacock King* such a fantastic anime. From the moment you begin to watch PK the mystical aura about it will intrigue you while the quality of the art and animation carry the story brilliantly. Of the older series I've seen, PK retains the most freshness and is one of the better dubbed products I've run across in some time. It's a quality show through and through, a no-brainer insta-buy for anyone really, whether you're a die hard fan or just looking for an alternative to the horse hockey on prime time. I'll have a series 2 report as soon as the next volume becomes available. In the meantime, track down episode one. It's 49 minutes well spent.



AF Review

animation	F	D	C	B	A
dubbing	=====				
story	=====				
music	=====				

B+

Voltage Fighter Gowcaizer Round 1



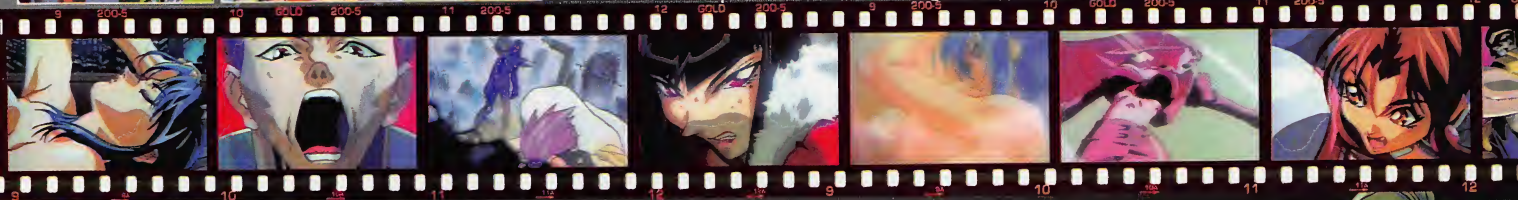
How many of you've played the thoroughly poor NeoGeo game *Voltage Fighter Gowcaizer*? None? Good. Never go near it. Ever. It's one of the worst fighting games ever made. Luckily, the anime is slightly better. In the early 21st century, a number of severe earthquakes strike Tokyo, obliterating half of it. A Professor Fudo believes these are being engineered by the head of the mysterious Belnar Institute, a school for—shall we say—special students. One day, Isato Kaiza, a popular high school student, is given a mysterious artifact called the Caizer Stone by fellow student Kash—also known as the superhero Hellstinger. Utilizing the Caizer Stone, Isato can transform into the legendary warrior Gowcaizer - and now, someone will finally stand up to the nefarious Shizuru Ozaki, head of the Belnar Institute! Yeah! Respect that story. Well, in synopsis it may sound generic, but there's more to it - quite a bit more. Perhaps too much for a single 45-minute episode. Unfortunately, the animation doesn't match the quality of the storyline, and Masami Ohbari's (character designer for the *Fatal Fury* anime) character design is really, really annoying. But the man sure can draw nice teats—*Gowcaizer* features the hottest shower scene in recent memory. So far, *Gowcaizer* appears to be a decent "filler" anime, though later volumes could get interesting, if the story stays at this level of quality. Oh, the animation could use a little improvement, too. We'll be back to review Episode 2 as soon as we we get a copy!



AF Review

animation	F	D	C	B	A
dubbing	=====				
story	=====				
music	=====				

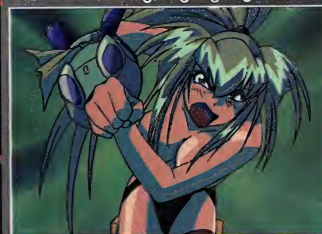
C+



Burn-Up W: File 4



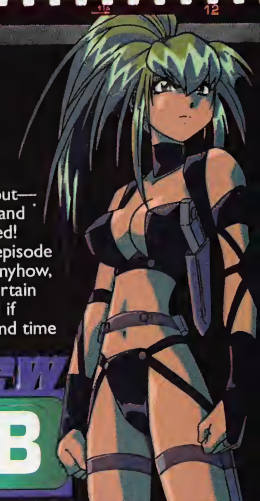
The climactic conclusion of *Burn-Up W* is a triumph! After her friend Shisato's brutal and senseless murder in the last episode, Rio and company set out to destroy once and for all the insanity caused by the virtual drug. Psycho's under the drug's powerful grasp, Wolf-Head, Jackal-Head, and Dober-Head (the dogs of war) have taken over Central Control, and the fight that ensues is what episode four is all about—well, almost all. I had high hopes that this episode, being the last in the series, would at least match the quality exhibited in the original and AIC hasn't let me down. *Burn Up 4* has some truly spectacular moments where nothing was spared to get the point across... Rio's pissed! While all of this fighting is going on, an actual sub-plot begins to unfold, which, came as quite a surprise. I mean, this is *Burn Up W*... an episode ago Rio was selling her used underwear to pay off credit cards. Oh, how I do love anime. Anyhow, for a series that started out rather shallow, *Burn Up* turned out to be just deep enough in certain areas to be taken seriously, without sacrificing the heavy action and zany nature of it all. And if breasts are your thing, well, *Burn Up* delivers once again as Rio is forced to disrobe for the 2nd time in the series. The nudity in *Burn Up W*, by the way, has always been in fun and never tasteless. Now that I've seen all 4 episodes I can honestly say that if you're looking for a series packed with action, gorgeous art, lots of special effects, hot babes, and just a little depth, then *Burn Up W* is for you. Now, if A.D. Vision really wants to make us happy they'll follow up with Saber Marionette J!



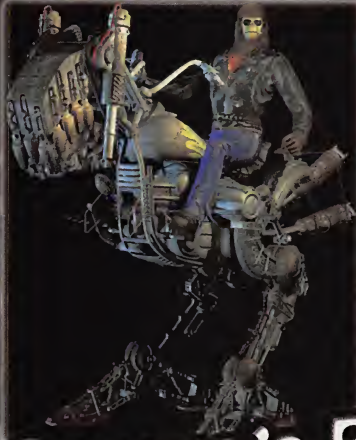
AF Review

animation	F	D	C	B	A
dubbing	=====				
story	=====				
music	=====				

B



GameFan Special Crazy-Mad Feature



I've said it before, and I'll say it again: Square are maniacs. It seems as though every week Square announces some shiny new nugget of gaming skill that takes whatever genre it represents to the next level. However, NOTHING can surpass *Chocobo de Battle* for pure shock value. Even *Final Fantasy VII*, which took RPGs to the absolute max, was less of a graphical improvement over the next best RPG than *Chocobo de Battle* compared to the next best fighting game.

Graphically, what's the best-looking 1-on-1 fighter? *Virtua Fighter 3*? Konami's as-yet-unnamed



Square's First Arcade Game?!

Cobra fighting game?

Those games push 1 and 5 million polygons, respectively. Wanna know how many polygons per second Square's fighting game is? Eighty million. Yeah, that's right baby... *eighty million*. That figure is according to weekly Famitsu, Japan's #1 game magazine... not a publication known to spread false rumors. Even if it was a misprint, which is possible, the least amount of polygons

80,000,000 Polygons Per Second! That's Right, **Eighty Million!!**

per second *CdB* could be displaying would be eight million... still incredible. What hardware does this gaming madness run on, you may be asking? An SGI Onyx 2 workstation. In fact,

Chocobo de Battle (er... these don't look like any chocobos I've ever seen!) makes its debut in L.A. at this summer's Siggraph, the industry's premiere computer graphics expo where Square revealed the *Final Fantasy VI* CG game in '95.

Square claims that there is a "high possibility" that *Chocobo de Battle* will be released as an arcade game, and later (ack) for the PlayStation. I dunno about you, but I don't want to see this game with (at least) 79,640,000 of its polygons sheared away.

Chocobo de Battle is currently under development at Square L.A., and it's totally unknown whether these CG characters are actual in-game models or simply image renders.

-Nick Rox

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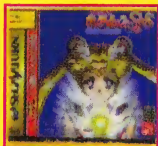
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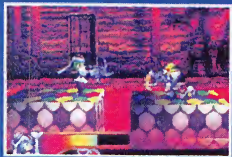
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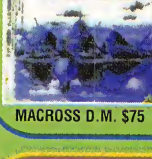
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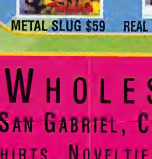
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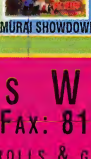
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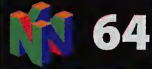


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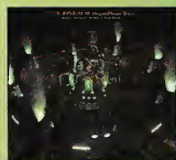
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Top secret news, wild speculation and blatant untruths from the world's most respectful video-games gossip columnist - The Enquirer! This month, Mr. A.C. Styles rocked E3 on a mission to apply pressure on as many video games developers as possible in order to uncover some really rather sensitive information. Here's the scoop, game fans!

M2baditsnevercomingout... State of the art hardware guru turns to fridge manufacturing?!

At the Nintendo party, I was able to uncover rumors from drunk developers that the M2 will not be launched in either Japan or the US. From my inebriated sources, people over at Matsushita have canned the "middleman" responsible for the \$100 million deal (to buy the rights to the hardware) between 3DO and Matsushita. The gentleman now works in Matsushita's refrigerator department in Osaka, Japan. So what's the reason for this happening? The hardware isn't coming out, so the guy who signed the deal 'falls'. Talk about the cut-throat business of video games!

Nintendo 64 emerges from the fog...

With some actual game release dates! Here's the complete scoop on all those juicy N64 titles you weren't allowed to play at E3. *Metal Gear* has finally been announced for the Nintendo 64. *Conker's Quest* by Rare will be released by Rare themselves and not Nintendo. *F-Zero 64* will be released in January 1998 and *Zelda 64* follows in February 1998. The US version of *Zelda* is already being translated and should be completed by December. Both games are 128 megs big. The release of the 64DD in the US will include a game bundle; you'll get the disc drive add-on and the second *Zelda 64* chapter! The Japanese *Zelda 64* gets a release on November 30th. And to complete this cavalcade of new info, treasure have one more N64 game in the works. Iguana are busy working on *Turok 2*, and although nothing was shown at E3, the game will not use fog, have three times as many weapons and levels, will run at speeds of between 30 and 60 fps, and maybe run at a screen resolution of 640x480 when completed. Natsume are remaking their SNES classic, *Harvest Moon*, for both the Nintendo 64 and GameBoy, the N64 version not appearing until Summer 1998. Core are scheduled to make a *Tomb Raider* version for a Summer 1998 release. *Killer Instinct 1* (the arcade game) that Nintendo promised, will finally be coming out for the Nintendo 64 next year when the DD64 ships in the US. The only difference is that the FMV will be letter-boxed. *Killer Instinct 3* is also finally being made. The new game will feature a whole new cast of characters, as well as the return of some familiar faces. *KI3* is rumored to be Rare's first real 3D fighting game (similar to *Virtua Fighter 3* in terms of game playing environments). *Pilotwings 2* will be released in December in Japan. *Donkey Kong 64* is now being made for the 64DD and not cartridge, but the Enquirer reckons that Rare will make two versions of the game (in a similar way to *Zelda 64*) but remember, this is just downright speculation. Nintendo is re-releasing *Super Mario 64* (the US version) and *Wave Race 64* in Japan. The major differences is that both games will now use the Rumble pack and that the games will be around \$60 compared to when they were first released, where they fetched \$100.

Capcom: Keeping the Street Fighting legend alive!
Capcom has some really amazing stuff in development for the arcade and the home market. The

first news is from Japanese sources at Capcom. *Street Fighter 4* will be 2D and will be Capcom's first foray into 64bit hardware. *SF4* will be released sometime in 1998 and will feature Ryu. All other characters are unknown. Capcom of Japan will also finally announce their first N64 game in one month. The rumors of Capcom making a puzzle game for the N64 are true and there are at least five more games in the works including a fighting game and *Ghouls & Ghosts 64*. Sources said all major announcements will be left for the Nintendo Shoshinkai in Japan this November.

Street Fighter 3 is being made for the Saturn and the PlayStation (as reported five months ago in Other Stuff) but won't be released until Summer 1998. The Saturn version will use the RAM cart and the PS version may use some form of RAM upgrade, but nothing has been confirmed. *Street Fighter 3 Dash* will be released in the arcades this November and features four new characters and faster gameplay. The new characters are... not going to be revealed until next month!! Sorry!! Capcom's first M2 game that uses *Street Fighter 2* characters will be released in the 2nd quarter of 1998, but the game won't be released for the home market because the M2 will only be used for arcade game and not home games (remember, Matsushita has canned the M2 home system). Last but not least, Capcom has already begun translation on *Marvel Super Heroes vs. Street Fighter* for the PlayStation and Saturn.

Eidos: Saturn Fighting Force fans are hopping mad!
Fighting Force for Saturn will not be coming out to the US because Eidos feels it is not a viable platform for them to make money on. Another reason is that Sega charges thousands of dollars for Cine-Pac technology to 3rd party companies, and Eidos ain't buyin'.

- Namco: 'Tekken' on allcomers!!**
Tekken 3 for the PlayStation will now be released simultaneously with the Japanese version in January of 1998, but could possibly be pushed back until February or March. No upgrade will ship with the game, and the programmers of the game have confirmed to me that *Tekken 3* will look better than the arcade without an upgrade. The PlayStation T3 will run at 60 frames with the 3D backgrounds intact, and will also feature (as you'd expect) a brand new two-to-three minute intro and all new CG for the entire cast. *Tekken 4* and a new racing game are in the works from the arcade division. *Tekken 4* is rumored to use some new hardware which is said to be the equivalent to Sony's PlayStation 2. *Tekken 4* will be released sometime in the end of 1998. Namco's newest *Ridge Racer* sequel for the PS will be released on December 3rd in Japan and will be released in the US in April next year. And finally, here's the most up-to-date list of *Tekken 3* characters I could find. We're pretty sure this is the entire *Tekken 3* cast, but rumors persist of a playable Kazuya, another unknown fighter named Rage and a third player color for Eddy Gordo where he sports an Afro! For the moment though, here's a list of all the extra Rave War time-released competitors.
1. Kuma and Panda (this is not the original Kuma as he died. The Panda is under the care of Xioyu).
 2. Julia Chang (a native following in the footsteps of the deceased Michelle Chang).
 3. Gun Jack (a new unit with all of P. Jack and Jack's moves plus some new techniques).
 4. Mokujin (a wooden doll brought to life by Ogre whose moves change every round!).
 5. Anna Williams (a third player costume for Nina Williams).

6. Brian Fury (a robotic Muai Tai fighter in the style of Bruce, built by Dr Bosconovich's rival!)
7. Heihachi (the pantaloons king and Vincent Price look alike).

8. Ogre 1 and Ogre 2 (just like the two Kazuya fighters in *Tekken 2* - Ogre two has wings and a unique breath attack).

Tecmo: Dead or Alive development team come bouncing back!

Tecmo is making three Nintendo 64 games at this time, but hasn't officially announced them yet. The first title (as reported a year ago in Other Stuff) is a fighting game by the same team who did the Model 2 game *Dead or Alive*. The other game is *Tecmo SuperBowl 64*. Both games should be shown or announced within the next three months. The last game is *Ninja Gaiden 64* and will be released sometime in 1998.

Rare: Developing for the PlayStation!!!!!!

Well, here's some shocking news I overheard at the Nintendo party from some drunk Rare executives. According to these guys, the reason Rare is now publishing their own games (*Conker's Quest*) is that Rare wanted to make games for the Sony's PlayStation... and Nintendo found out. The reason Rare wanted to make PS games is that they feel they would be able to make more money publishing on not just one but two consoles. Nintendo's response? They freaked out and offered Rare \$50 million, and the right to publish their own titles. By doing this Nintendo doesn't lose Rare, Rare makes more money, and we the gamers get more Rare games on just one platform! Thanks, Nintendo!

Sega: Polishing up the old Dural!

The Dural hardware, Sega's newest hardware sensation, was recently shown to some European developers, and here's what they said. The hardware was running an arcade perfect port of *not VF3*, but one of Sega's newest Model 3 arcade games, the graphics chip was evidently more powerful than Model 3 (especially in the polygon department which is said to be around 1,000,000 to 2,000,000 polygons a second), and the new hardware will be released in September of 1998 in Japan with almost every Model 3 game released at launch. Core, Shiny, Sega US, Sega Japan, and Warp are rumored to be making games on mock-up systems already. Warp is rumored to be transferring *D's Diner 2* for the Dural and PC machines... because the M2 has been canned.

Vic Tokai: In conference with professional killers!?

The makers of the recently-released fighting game for N64, *Dark Rift*, are working on two new games for the Nintendo64. The first one is *Golgo 13* which will be released in the Summer of 1998 and the other game is a driving game which should be released by the end of the year.

And that about wraps up this shocking and downright litigious Other Stuff. Come back next month when those *Street Fighter 3 Dash* characters are revealed. Until then... RESPECT!!



If anyone knows the whereabouts of Ken Lobb, please call the tree-house at Nintendo of America...

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FROM A CAVE DEEP INSIDE AGOURA...



Dear Post-Apocalyptic,

I think I have just spent the best \$35 in my life. Ya see, I just came home from Toys 'R Us with a brand spankin' new 32-bit system. "Well, he must have just got an old Jaguar or 32X," I hear you say. 'Fraid not, my friend. For this steal of a deal I got the only true 3D system ever created: the almighty Virtual Boy. I picked up the fantabulous system for \$25 and I also bought one of the best side-scrolling platformers that I've played in years, *Wario Land*, for only \$10! It makes me glad that I live in such a greedy, competitive, capitalist country. I could have written another sob story letter crying "Why did they stop making games for this system?" but I didn't. Cuz if they did, this broke college student (who hasn't bought a new game since *Yoshi's Island*) wouldn't have been able to afford a 32-bit system!

Yours,
Neight Partenhesmer
Gresham, OR

It's a steal, isn't it? Stores all around the country are practically giving the Virtual Boy away. For \$25 you should all rush out and buy one right now. It's worth the asking price just for Wario Land and Red Alarm alone. Besides, even if you don't play on it, it looks damn cool sitting on your desk.

Dear Postymeisty,

Yesterday I read the Sydney Morning Herald and guess what? "Corporate Culture Clash Quashes Toy Mega Merger..." Reliieeeeved! The first time I heard about this Sega-Bandai merger I was struck. Being a Sega fan, I was obviously concerned about the future of Sega after the merger, especially when I heard that Bandai's President had announced *Virtua Fighter* (to me, one of the main reasons to be a Sega fan) might appear on the PlayStation. Ooooh, the pain. Not because I hate Sony (as a matter of fact, I'm currently playing *FFVII*), but because it would've just destroyed Sega's PRIDE. By giving a *VF* game to competitors, Sega is symbolically saying, "OK! We surrender! We need money, so can you please let our game be on your system?" Soon after receiving millions of dollars for *VF*, Bandai would have continued to take advantage of

Sega. Just think: *Sonic The Hedgehog*... on PLAYSTATION! What pain! Oh well, what I'm trying to say is I'm relieved now. Sega, YOU HAVE GOT TO FIGHT!!

Alvin Pontoh
Sydney, Australia

Well, here's a different take on the cancellation of the Sega-Bandai merger. Personally, I was a bit sad to hear the deal was off. I thought it would have given Sega a much needed shot in the arm, and you know, they never actually confirmed that VF would come to the PS. Besides, I was looking forward to seeing some high-quality Bandai-produced AM2 toys. Just think: your own Rage and Smarty action figures! Jeeyah!

Hey Posty,

I've got the usual videogame questions, but before I get to them I would like to say your magazine is my favorite pick and keep up the good work. Also, THANKS for bringing back the Anime section. Okay, on to the questions:

1. I just read from another source that *Tobal 2* is not coming to the US. It seems that Square/Sony can't translate the game (mainly due to Quest mode) in a timely fashion. Is this true?

2. I own a PS Link Cable and I've noticed it's been neglected horribly this past year. Are there any new games using this feature and if so can you name some?

3. I recently saw an ad for *Dead or Alive* that indicated it was for both SS and PS. I thought it was an SS exclusive. What gives?

4. My final question regards *Spawn*. I've noticed poor old *Spawn* is missing something very important. His cloak! Where is *Spawn's* cloak! He can't fight without the living cloak! This is a tragedy! Will *Spawn* have his cloak in the final game?

Thanks for your time and keep up the good work!

Brandon Richardson,
Bridgeport, WV

Glad you like the new Anime Fan, Brandon, you're not the only one. And for those who asked: E. Storm & Nick Rox are responsible. Direct all praise to them.

1. *Sony still has no plans to release Tobal 2 in the States (doh!). Yes, the translation might take some time, but they could do it if they wanted. It's more an economical decision. Your only chance is if a 3rd party publisher (like Working Designs) decides to pick it up.*

2. *Steel Reign, Armored Core and Bushido Blade off the top of my head. But Ridge Racer Revolution, Final Doom and Doom are the still the best reasons to own a Link Cable in my opinion.*

3. *It's true. Dead or Alive will be bouncing its way to a PS near you later this year. Tecmo*

says they plan to release the voluptuous 3D fighter shortly after the SS version, but we've seen nothing of it yet. Breast assured as soon as we do we'll tell you how it's "shaping" up.

4. *Apparently, Spawn's been delayed, and the game will receive a major "reworking" so the whole cloak thing is flappin' in the breeze...*

Dear Poster,

I read lots of magazines and you guys are the best! Best! Best! See? 3 bests! Other guys only get 2! But I hold a deadly secret! All videogames will blow up if I say this one word! Are you ready? Listen: Girlfriends! Ha! If we all had girlfriends, who would play games? Now I'll sit back, pray for girlfriends and watch videogames die! Yep, I'm eating all my food. Prayer works. You'll see!

Rocky Conners,
Westchester, OH

You don't get out much do you Rocky?



VENUS LOVE AND BEAUTY SHOCK TO ALL!

With the news that *Sailor Moon* is back on the USA Network at 8:30 Saturday mornings, the SailorMoon-o-meter is way, way up.

Write to me or I'll run for President!

The Postmeister

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International Superstar Soccer, Konami of America's debut title for the N64, sets the standard for soccer games. ISS features 36 International teams, each comprised of 16 players, and also boasts incredible realism, seamless play, true 3D analog control, and an intuitive Artificial Intelligence. Truly soccer at its finest.



Multi Racing Championship N64

From Ocean, Multi Racing Championship for the Nintendo 64 takes rally racing to an all new 64-bit extreme. Featuring real time lighting and changing weather conditions, MRC also boasts a two player mode and Rumble Pak compatibility for the ultimate in racing thrills.



Rage Racer PlayStation

From Namco, Rage Racer continues where Ridge Racer Revolution left off, and pushes the Playstation to new heights. With the new customized features, players can now zoom around four brand new courses in a full season of driving mayhem on a search for the elusive devil car! New vehicles, incredible music and loads of custom features combine in the best Racer ever!



Ogre Battle PlayStation

From Atlus, Ogre Battle makes a final appearance for the true collector. Strategy based, Ogre Battle offers hours of endless RPG/Strategy insanity! This game is a must for those who missed the first limited run in its 16-bit form.



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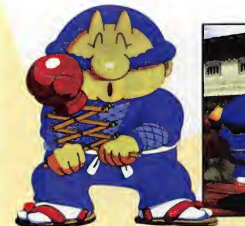
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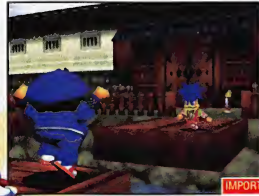
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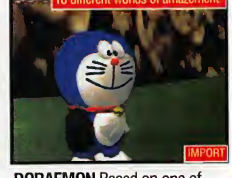
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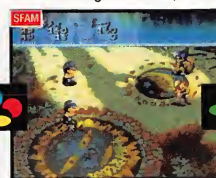
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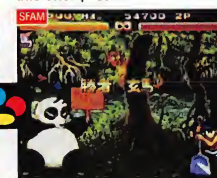
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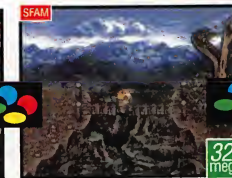
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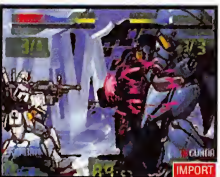
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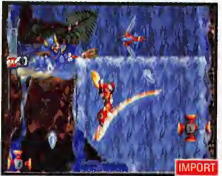
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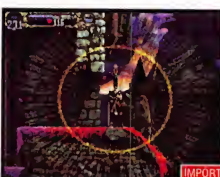
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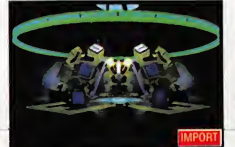
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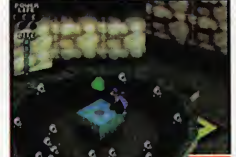
DRAGON BALL Z LEGENDS In your idle time until the release of Dragon Ball Z GT, why not give the next best thing a shot. Millions have. \$49.95



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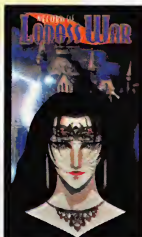
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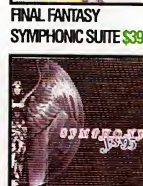
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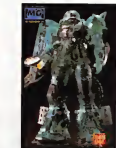
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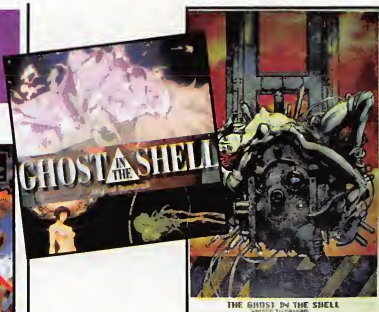
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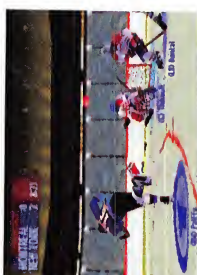
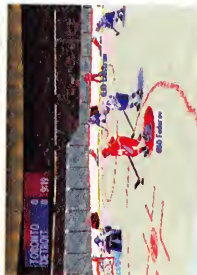
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